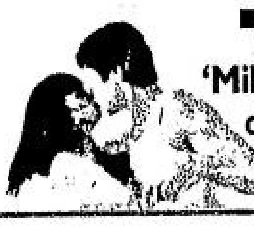
■ Entertainment / A2-1

Willie's bride behind him 'all the way'

■ Business / B1

Sy eyes 39% stake in EPCIBank

■ Lifestyle / G1



'Milan' and 'Sabel' make credible cases for Urian best picture

■ Sports / A28

Spurs a win away from sweeping Suns

■ Lifestyle / G2

'A Midsummer Night' in Iligan

Catch a 'jueteng' lord first before we text you, cops told

MANGHULI MUNA KAYA KAYO NG JUETENG LORD?

By Luige A. del Puerto

DON'T waste your time texting 2920 unless the police catch a "jueteng" lord first, a militant peasant group urged the public yesterday.

About all that your tex-

CATCH/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

MILF reports presence of 2 Japanese soldiers

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front has information that could shed light on Japan's efforts to track down two elderly men believed to be Japanese soldiers hiding in the mountains of Mindanao since the end of World War II, an MILF spokesperson said yesterday.

The MILF report came amid fears the whole

MILF / A6

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Monday, May 30, 2005 ★★ 84 pages 9 sections Vol. 20 No. 171 P18
website: www.inq7.net

Mike A back, ready to face Senate probe

CALM BEFORE THE STORM? First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" Arroyo is welcomed at the airport by his granddaughter Mikaela and daughter Luli. ROGER MARGALLO

Bishop has 8 'jueteng' witnesses

By Volt Contreras, Christian V. Esguerra and Christine O. Avendaño

HE TOOK a "vacation" abroad, away from the heat of allegations linking him to illegal gambling. Last night, he returned just as the fire was about to be lit.

First Gentleman Jose Miguel Arroyo arrived from Hong Kong on the eve of what portends to be a heated Senate inquiry into "jueteng," amid allegations that he, along with his son, Pampanga Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo, may have benefited from gambling payola.

Hours before Arroyo flew in, jueteng fighter Archbishop Oscar Cruz told the INQUIRER that he had eight witnesses ready to link people "beyond congressmen" to the illegal numbers game.

Will the stench of the alleged payola reach the doorstep of Malacañang?

"We'll know once they testify," Cruz said.

Arroyo issued no arrival statement and let his lawyer and spokesperson, Jesus Santos, do the talking.

Santos branded the jueteng controversy as the work of "irresponsible politicians" who had failed to prove past charges of anomalies against the presidential spouse.

"Regarding their new attack,

MIKE A/ A4

RP democracy still unstable

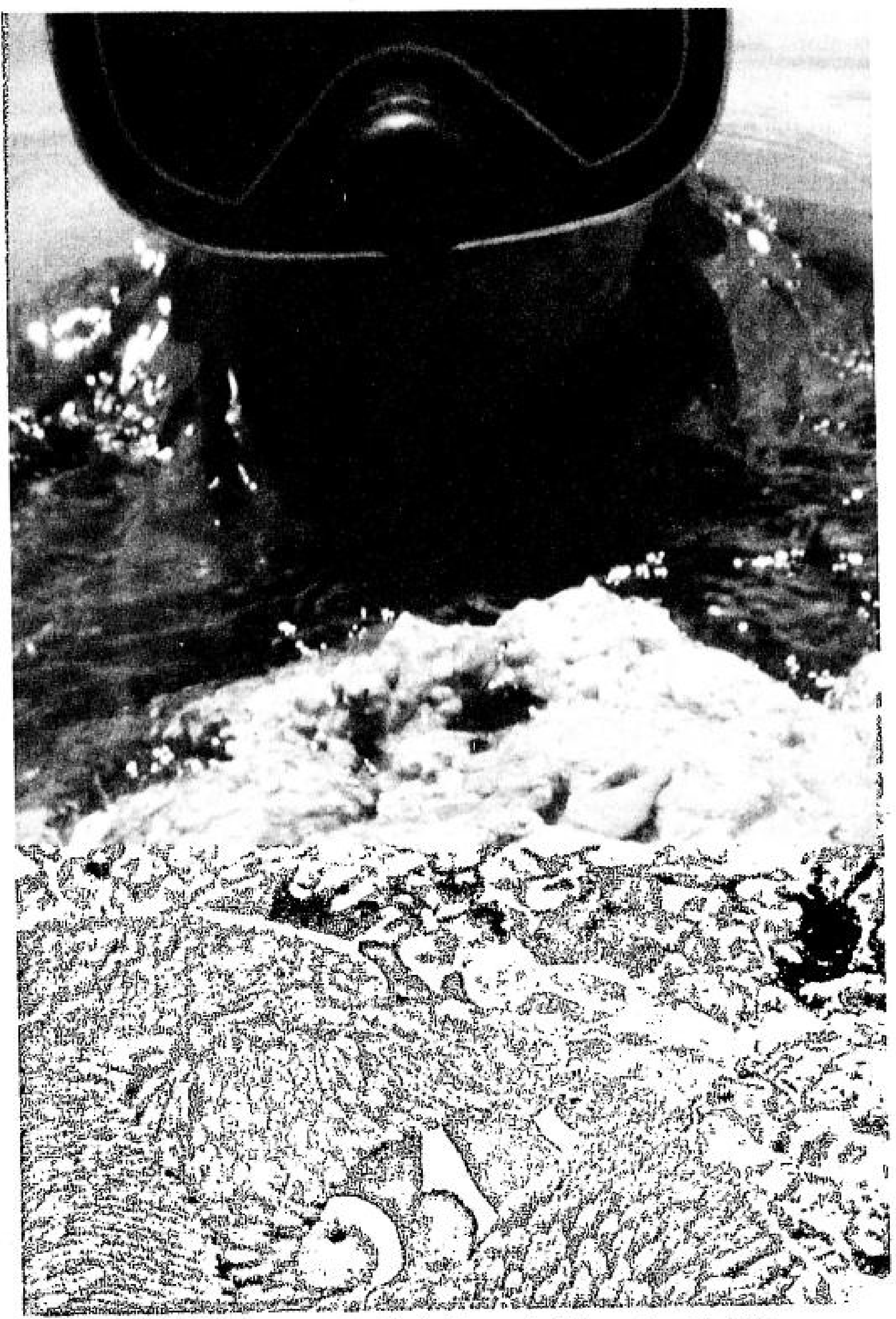
By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

SINCE the overthrow of the Marcos dictatorship by People Power in February 1986, the Philippines has had three elected presidents after Corazon Aquino—Fidel Ramos in 1992, Joseph Estrada in 1998 and Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in May 2004. Three presidential elections within 12 years, however, give a false picture of the stability and consolidation of Philippine democracy.

The picture is marred by one striking discontinuity: The Estrada administration collapsed in January 2001 under the pressure of another people power (Edsa II), and from the withdrawal of military support. Then Vice President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo succeeded Estrada through extra-electoral means—the intervention of the Supreme Court—which gave a veneer of constitutional legitimacy to her succession.

RP DEMOCRACY/ A6



FIND Nemo and hundreds of his kind in the Panacalan fish sanctuary in Anda, Pangasinan. EV ESPIRITU.

Townsfolk protect 'Nemo,' friends in fish sanctuary

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

ANDA, Pangasinan—You can find "Nemo" and hundreds of his friends in a fish sanctuary here.

Nemo is a clownfish, a colorful character in the 2003 Disney animation, "Finding Nemo," that introduced moviegoers to the fascinating world of the sea.

It was this movie that inspired fisherfolk to gather clownfish from various areas of the Panacalan fish sanctuary, a 50-hectare marine-protected area off the shore of this island town, and put them in one corner of the sanctuary. Here, the clownfish proliferate safely and away from collectors of aquarium (decorative) fishes.

It helps that sea anemones—soft, brightly colored sea creatures that look like flowers and live on rocks under the water—are also protected by fishermen and allowed to flourish. The anemone provide protection for the clownfish, which in turn feed and clean their host.

Some fishermen used to illegally collect clownfish and other decorative fishes using cyanide and other poisons. Anemone were also collected for food or to sell as aquarium decoration.

"But since the sanctuary is off-limits to all forms of fishing, legal or illegal, the clownfishes are thriving," said Ben Caasi, a council member of Barangay Macaleeng and a *bantay dagat* (guardian of the sea).

TOWNSFOLK/ A8

60-room AFP resort being built on Boracay

By Fe Zamora

A 60-ROOM military resort is rising in Boracay under a project of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu to raise the morale of soldiers, but it has been slammed by critics concerned with the troops' lack of basic needs in the battlefield.

Construction of the resort, dubbed the "Sampaguita Family Recreation Center," began last December, two months after Abu took his oath as AFP chief of staff on Oct. 29. Even as construction was going on, the resort had its "soft opening" on April 15. Lt. Gen. Emmanuel Teodosio, chief of the AFP Central Command, attended the ceremonies.

A soldier assigned to the resort said the facility was a "remembrance" that Abu would like to leave when he retires on June 24. It is one of several projects the Armed Forces chief of staff has initiated that have caused controversy, including one that put decorative tiles on the sidewalks in Camp Aguinaldo.

"The hotel is for the morale and rest and recreational needs of ordinary soldiers and their families who could only dream of staying in Boracay," said Teodosio when asked for comment by the INQUIRER.

He described the resort as a "labor of love" built on donations of businessmen, veterans and civilians. He mentioned, among others, the Kaibigan ng mga Kawal sa Kapuluan, a nonprofit group dedicated to helping soldiers and their families.

But the total cost of the hotel and even its very existence seemed to be a secret in Camp Aguinaldo. "We have not seen the plan. The papers must be at Centcom in Cebu," said an INQUIRER

60-ROOM/ A8

MORO ISLAMIC LIBERATION FRONT

PUBLIC'S FIRST LOOK

The new chair of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, Ebrahim Murad, makes his first appearance as the leader of the secessionist group during the ongoing three-day Moro, consultative assembly in Sultan Kudarat. *(Story on Page A2)* VAL HANDUMON

GOV'T HOSPITAL

Dark stories born in delivery rooms

By Christian V. Esguerra

TOUGH luck for poor and pregnant moms. They may not all be welcome at Fabella Hospital in Manila, which is known for delivering babies at low cost.

Two health workers and a nurse said they witnessed some cases of inhumane treatment of women in the throes of childbirth at the old, dilapidated hospital.

In separate interviews with the INQUIRER, the three sources admitted to seeing pregnant women in labor, being cursed and scolded by some doctors and nurses, purportedly for failing to practice birth control.

Fabella Hospital is known as the facility to go to for pregnant women who can't afford to go to private hospitals. It handles at least six births at any given time on ordinary days. The number usually rises to 15 during the "peak season," usually in September, according to one source.

"*Ikaw na naman? Taun-taon ka na lang nanganak! Pagkatapos nito, magpa-*ligate *ka na!* (It's you again? Every year you give birth! After this, you should have a ligation!)" one health worker recalled hearing a male doctor scold a mother in the delivery room.

Getting no reply from the helpless woman, the doctor allegedly was heard mumbling to his assistants: "*Sana patay ang bata, sana patay ang bata* (I hope the baby is dead)."

"He got even more angry when he saw that the baby was alive," the source told the INQUIRER.

The same doctor, a graduate of

DARK/ A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon will be cloudy with rainshowers and thunderstorms. Mindanao and Western Visayas including Palawan will be mostly cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/05/30/05 SOURCE: PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

MILF holds biggest-ever assembly

By Edwin O. Fernandez
and Charlie C. Señase
PDI Mindanao Bureau

SULTAN KUDARAT, Maguindanao—Thousands of unarmed members and sympathizers of the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front yesterday converged here from all over Mindanao for a three-day consultative assembly called by MILF leaders.

Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said foreign officials, mostly from Muslim states, as well as the United States and Japan, had been invited to observe the consultations. Government peace negotiators would also attend the meetings.

"Adopted resolutions and positions in this assembly will be presented to the formal peace negotiations," Kabalu said.

MILF chair Ebrahim "al-Haj" Murad was expected to address the meeting on Monday morning.

MILF leaders expected some 1.5 million Muslims to attend the gathering.

"This is a different show of force," Kabalu said. "We're not showing guns and weapons, but our real strength—the people supporting our struggle for a Bangsamoro homeland," he said.

The MILF sympathizers and members started arriving here in droves on Saturday for the assembly aimed at reaffirming the MILF as the representative of the Bangsamoro people.

"We would like to ask them if they would like us to continue the mandate given us in solving the decades-old problem in Mindanao," Ghazali Jaafar, MILF political affairs chief, told the INQUIRER.

Expected to attend the gathering were former Indonesian President Abdulrahman Wahid, Libyan Ambassador Salem Adam, chief government negotiator Silvestre Afable and Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita Deles.

"Even former US Charge d'Affaires Joseph Mussomelli sent feelers he was coming," said Kabalu.

Checkpoints manned by military, police and uniformed but unarmed MILF members were set up at all three entry points leading to the MILF's Camp Darapanan, a vast field of coconut trees along the Simuay River.

Hundreds of vehicles that ferried the MILF sympathizers lined the roadside leading to Darapanan. Delegates from as far as Tawi-Tawi and Davao del Norte started coming in as early as Friday, converting the boundary of Barangay Simuay and Darapanan into a huge marketplace.

Carinderias sprouted overnight like mushrooms along stretches of the Cotabato-Davao highway and Cotabato-Marawi road.

Mayor Tocao Mastura of Sultan Kudarat said a five-kilometer radius had been declared firearms-free.

Jaafar said a representative from the World Islamic Call Society would be among the speakers at the assembly which he described as "the biggest gathering" of Muslims.

He said the gathering is part of the MILF's efforts to consult the Bangsamoro people on issues that they believe would solve the Mindanao problem.

"We are at the final stages of our peace efforts with the Philippine government, our people must know what we are doing for them," Jaafar said.

"We would like to ensure that we still have the mandate to represent them in the talks," he said.

The Philippine government began negotiating with the MILF in 1997 to end peacefully more than three decades of Muslim separatist rebellion that has killed at least 120,000 people and stunted development in resource-rich Mindanao.

Talks collapsed in 2000 when the Philippine military launched offensives and captured several of the MILF's jungle bases, including its main stronghold at Camp Abubakar in Maguindanao.

Malaysia rescued the peace process in 2001 and has since been brokering the talks.

The negotiations between the government and the MILF are expected to resume next month in Kuala Lumpur.

"Our members would like to hear from our leaders where we are in the peace process and where the entire process is heading to," Von al-Haq, head of the MILF's ceasefire panel, told Reuters.

"Of course, our leaders would also like to hear from our members what are their expectations and how we are going to proceed with the talks."

Maj. Gen. Raul Relano, 6th Infantry Division chief, said the situation appeared to be normal with no reported presence of armed MILF guerrillas in the area.

"We have agreements with them not to carry firearms in the assembly area," Relano told reporters.

Unconfirmed reports said the MILF had Cotabato Chinese-Filipino trader Benny Kotah in its custody. He will be presented to government representatives, a source in Army intelligence said.

Kotah, who was seized on April 8 in Cotabato City, was rescued by MILF rebels from an undisclosed place in Lanao del Sur and will be presented Monday to show the MILF's sincerity in fighting kidnapping.

But Kabalu has denied any knowledge of Kotah's rescue.

With a report from Reuters

MILF fighters without their firearms stand in formation around the perimeter of Camp Darapanan in Sultan Kudarat where the three-day consultative assembly on the peace process is being held.

VAL HANDUMON

Australia, NZ give $16M to Mindanao

AUSTRALIA and New Zealand are pouring in some US$16 million in fresh aid into Mindanao to fund projects that would benefit the Muslim communities impoverished by decades of armed conflict.

The development package, to be supervised by the United Nations Development Program, is earmarked for livelihood projects, health, housing, disaster management and other basic services mainly for families of former Moro National Liberation Front rebels.

A co-sharing agreement among the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAid), New Zealand and the UNDP is set to be signed at 5:30 p.m. today at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel in Mandaluyong City.

The fund will be dispersed under the Act For Peace program set to start in June, and is expected to benefit 15 provinces and 14 cities in the South, including the Caraga region, the UNDP said.

AusAid is financing the bulk of the program with $14 million in aid, while the balance will be shouldered by New Zealand, said UNDP communications officer Agnes Aleman. *Volt Contreras*

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10th MCLE Lecture Series to be held on June 18 & 25, 2005 and July 2 & 9, 2005

The Supreme Court of the Philippines mandates ALL LAWYERS to comply with the 36 credit unit requirement under *Bar Matter 850* as a requisite for continuing the practice of law. Failure to comply would mean being listed as a delinquent member of the IBP and will not be allowed to practice law. The first compliance period ended last December 31, 2004. Lawyers may avail of our 36-UNIT FULL COURSE SEMINAR which may be credited to either the first compliance period or the second compliance period.

Please check the box of your chosen session		TIME	SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION/ CREDIT UNITS (CU)	TOPIC	LECTURER
June 18, 2005	AM Session ☐	8-10am	Legal Writing & Oral Advocacy (2 CU)	Orality in Advocacy	Justice Magdangal M. De Leon *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*
		10:15-12:15pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws (2 CU)	Practice & Procedure Before the Labor Arbiters & NLRC	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan *Former Dean, UP College of Law*
	PM Session ☐	1-3pm	MCLE-Prescribed: Technology & the Law (2 CU)	Scientific Evidence: DNA and its Analysis	Dra. Raquel B. Del Rosario-Fortun *M.D., FPSP, UP College of Medicine*
		3:15-6:15pm	Legal Ethics (3 CU)	The Lawyer's Pitfalls	Justice Hilarion L. Aquino *(ret.)* *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*
June 25, 2005	AM Session ☐	8-10am	International Law (2 CU)	International Law & the Admission of Aliens	Atty. Ronaldo P. Ledesma *Head, Board of Special Inquiry, BI*
		10:15-12:15pm	MCLE-Prescribed: Reforms in the Law (2 CU)	2004 New Rules on Notarial Practice	Justice Hector L. Hofileña *(ret.)* *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*
	PM Session ☐	1-3pm	Trial & Pre-Trial Skills (2 CU)	New Pre-Trial Rules of 2004	Justice Noel G. Tijam *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*
		3:15-6:15pm	Alternative Dispute Resolution (3 CU)	Mediation & Arbitration of Construction Disputes	Dean Custodio O. Parlade *Former Dean, San Sebastian College of Law, Commercial Arbitrator*
July 2, 2005	AM Session ☐	8-10am	Update in Substantive & Procedural Laws (2 CU)	Taxation Laws & the Corporation	Justice Japar B. Dimaampao *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*
		10:15-12:15pm	Alternative Dispute Resolution (2 CU)	ADR in the Workplace	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan *Former Dean, UP College of Law*
	PM Session ☐	1-3pm	MCLE-Prescribed: Reforms in the Law (2 CU)	Reforms in the Dangerous Drugs Act	Justice Diosdado M. Peralta *Associate Justice, Sandiganbayan*
		3:15-6:15pm	Legal Ethics (3 CU)	Civil, Criminal & Administrative Liabilities of a Lawyer	Justice Jose L. Sabio, Jr. *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*
July 9, 2005	AM Session ☐	8-10am	Legal Writing & Oral Advocacy (2 CU)	Pleadings & Appellate Briefs	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez, Jr. *(ret.)* *Associate Justice, Supreme Court*
		10:15-12:15pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws (2 CU)	Significant New Provisions & Amendments in the Procedural Rules	Justice Ruben T. Reyes *Associate Justice, Court of Appeals*
	PM Session ☐	1-3pm	Trial & Pre-Trial Skills (2 CU)	Trial Technique	Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval *Associate Justice, Sandiganbayan*
		3:15-6:15pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws (3 CU)	Updates in Commercial Laws	Justice Jose C. Vitug *(ret.)* *Associate Justice, Supreme Court*
Total Credit Units			36 CU		

Date/Day/Time: June 18 & 25, 2005 and July 2 & 9, 2005
Saturdays, from 8:00 AM to 6:15 PM

Venue: Ballroom II, Valle Verde Country Club (beside PSC Complex *[formerly ULTRA]*), Capt. Henry Javier St., Bo. Ugong, Pasig City, Metro Manila

Inclusions: Meals (AM or PM snacks for half day sessions plus lunch for whole day sessions), Hand-outs, Certificate of Attendance & Certificate of Appreciation, Seminar Bag/Kit, Free-flowing coffee and candies, Free Parking, Free Notarization of Compliance Report & Submission to the MCLE Office.

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Complete Address: ______________________ *Tel. No.:* ________
Fax No.: ________
Signature of Participant: ______________________ *E-mail Address:* ________

Police tighten security following Indon blasts

By Luige A. del Puerto

POLICE units nationwide tightened security around "soft targets" such as public markets, shopping malls and transport terminals following the bomb attacks in Indonesia on Saturday that killed 20 people and injured several others.

But police spokesperson Sr. Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said there was no need to raise the terror alert level since intelligence units had not received any specific threat.

"The (chief of) the directorate for operations, Director Isidro Lapeña, has been advised to remind all PNP field units to increase visibility patrols," Bataoil said.

"Chief PNP (Director General Arturo) Lomibao also directed the chief of the directorate for intelligence, Director Simeon Dizon, to determine the threat level in the country although no specific threat (has been) reported as of this period," he said.

On Saturday, two bombs exploded in a busy market in the Christian-dominated town of Tentena on Sulawesi island, killing 20 and injuring more than 40 people.

Indonesian police said the attacks bore the hallmarks of Islamic militants who were behind similar bombings in Indonesia, including the Bali blasts that killed more than 200 foreign tourists in October 2002.

The Philippines last raised its terror alert status in March after intelligence units received reports that the Abu Sayyaf, a bandit group linked to the regional terrorist network Jemaah Islamiyah, was poised to strike in key cities in the country.

Police said the bombings were ordered by Abu Solaiman, a top Abu Sayyaf leader who lost a relative when special forces stormed a jail in Taguig City on March 15. A day before, Abu Sayyaf detainees had seized control of the jail. At least 22 detainees and one SAF officer were killed in the firefight.

But authorities claimed they foiled the Easter bomb plot following the seizure of 10 sacks of explosives and other bomb-making materials weighing 600 kilos during a raid on an apartment in Quezon City.

The raiding team arrested Daud Santos, a member of the radical Rajah Solaiman Movement (RSM), allegedly linked to the Abu Sayyaf and the JI.

A month before, bombs exploded within hours of each other in Makati, General Santos and Davao cities, killing eight people and injuring at least 150 others.

The Abu Sayyaf quickly claimed responsibility for the attacks which became known as the Valentine's Day bombings.

Boracay folk buck Defensor

ILOILO CITY—Nearly 3,000 residents, guests, resort and restaurant owners and employees in the island-resort of Boracay have signed a petition opposing the confirmation of Environment Secretary Michael Defensor, who plans to declare the island a public domain and put it up for bidding.

Lara Salaver, president of the Boracay Foundation Inc. (BFI), one of two groups of business owners on the island, said the petition would be submitted to the Commission on Appointments, which is deliberating Defensor's appointment.

"We believe he is unfit to be DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) secretary because of his insistence that Boracay is public property and ownership of lots here can be acquired through public bidding," Salaver told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

In its one-page petition, BFI said Defensor's confirmation would be "inimical" to the development of the island's tourist industry because of his stand on land titling.

"He refuses to accept the fact that there are lands in Boracay that are titled and that landowners have the same right for their lands to be titled. His department claims that the titles that have been used are null and void. This would discourage investors from developing the island (because of) the threat that titles can be nullified," read the petition.

Defensor earlier affirmed the government's position that Boracay was public land and all the resorts on the beach were sitting on government property despite the claim of a group of resort owners that the courts had upheld their ownership of the lands they were occupying.

He was quoted in an INQUIRER report that said only one of the 595 establishments on the island disagreed with the DENR's classification and titling plan. The report identified the resort as the Waling Waling Beach Resort.

But Orlando Sacay, BFI vice president for external affairs and owner of Waling Waling Resort, belied Defensor's claim.

He pointed out that the BFI had repeatedly called on Defensor and the government to abide by the court decisions which said that a presidential proclamation classifying Boracay as a tourist and marine zone did not bar claimants from having their lands titled.

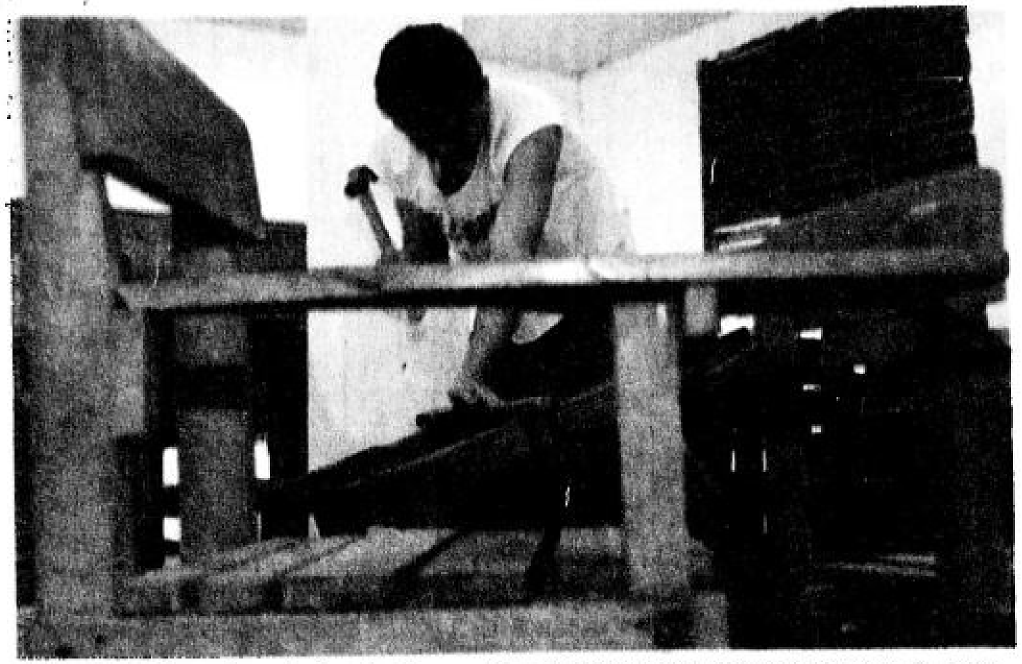
"The people here are very concerned to say the least (over Defensor's pronouncements). Many are very angry that they could lose the land they had been developing and on which they had been paying taxes for years," said Sacay.

Fr. Magloire Placer, Boracay parish priest, said it was "unfair" for occupants of the land who had been staying there and paying taxes for more than 20 years to have to fight for ownership of the land through a public bidding.

In a meeting attended by around 200 business owners and residents at the Boracay parish church yesterday, they agreed to hold a protest action on the island next week against the government's land titling scheme.

The DENR is set to issue an administrative order, declaring 579.295 hectares of the 1,032-hectare island as "alienable and disposable."

An area measuring about 259.6 hectares will be declared forest lands and will be used for plantations and fishponds. *Nestor Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*



A WORKMAN repairs a desk at the Lupang Pangako Elementary School in Payatas, Quezon City, ahead of the opening of classes on June 6. As in the past, the perennial shortage of classrooms, desks and teachers is expected to greet students the first day of class. RYAN LIM

₱2.1-B worth of drugs to be burned

SOME P2.1-billion worth of illegal drugs seized in the past three years by operatives of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency will go up in smoke today.

PDEA Director General Anselmo Avenido Jr. said the assorted illegal drugs would be burned at a waste incineration facility in Trece Martires, Cavite.

The illegal drugs were earlier used as evidence in the court cases filed against suspected drug lords and their cohorts, Avenido said.

"The courts already gave the go-signal for the destruction of the illegal drugs since the 410 cases where these unlawful substances were used as evidence were already terminated," he said.

Avenido said the illegal drugs to be incinerated include 1,500 kilos of ephedrine, a substance used in the manufacture of shabu (methamphetamine hydrochloride); 450 kilos of shabu and 30 kilos of marijuana.

Meanwhile, Avenido said a recent news report claiming that the country was a drug exporter was misleading.

Avenido said the basis of the report was a small paragraph from the Central Intelligence Agency website. He said that aside from claiming that the country was an exporter of marijuana and a transit point for heroin and shabu, no other details were given.

He said the CIA report was misleading since it did not show the numerous PDEA accomplishments which were lauded by the United Nations and the United States Drug Enforcement Agency.

"We have done a lot in our campaign against illegal drugs and records will attest to our success," Avenido said. *Nelson F. Flores*

College students moving to cheaper state schools

By Alcuin Papa

STUDENTS of private elementary and high schools are not the only ones transferring to the public schools because of high tuition. Students in private colleges and universities are also joining the exodus to the public schools.

The Commission on Higher Education has reported that about 10 percent of students in private colleges and universities have transferred to cheaper state institutions because of rising tuition and other expenses this year.

Dr. Cristina Padolina, CHEd commissioner, told reporters that records showed that 80 percent of college students had been enrolled in private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). But the number has dropped to 70 percent as students were flocking to state schools, she said.

"What we have noticed is that because of the tuition increases in private HEIs, many are enrolling in state universities and colleges," Padolina said.

The minimum tuition increase, Padolina noted, was three percent. But one school, the Asian Theological Seminary, had applied for a 150-percent tuition increase for its graduate program.

Padolina said the CHEd had asked state colleges and universities to impose a moratorium on tuition increases.

"Many of them (HEIs) had in place tuition increases that would be [implemented] over a few years. Many of them had in place increases of about P50 per unit for freshmen.

"But we are asking that they postpone these for now," Padolina said.

The CHEd recently placed a cap on tuition increases not to exceed the national inflation rate of 8.5 percent.

It said some 200 HEIs, 51 of them in the National Capital Region, had applied for tuition hikes of around P100 per unit. One-fourth of all the college students in the country, or roughly 670,000 students, are studying in colleges and universities in the NCR.

Padolina said that tuition increase requests above the inflation rate would "be critically reviewed by the CHEd before the colleges or universities could implement them."

Tuition increase limits will be in effect this school year which begins on June 6.

Increased school expenses have forced families to take a long, hard look at their budgets for their children's education.

The situation, according to Padolina, was complicated by the recent troubles of education pre-need companies like College Assurance Plan (CAP) and Pacific Plans Inc. (PPI) which had defaulted on payments for their plan holders.

Padolina thus advised financially hard-up families to utilize the CHEd's student loan program that has been in place for years.

"Last year, we did receive an increase in the funds available for the program. That program is available to everyone and not necessarily to those affected by the problems of the pre-need industry," Padolina said.

Otherwise, Padolina advised students to "transfer to state universities and colleges where the tuition would be lower."

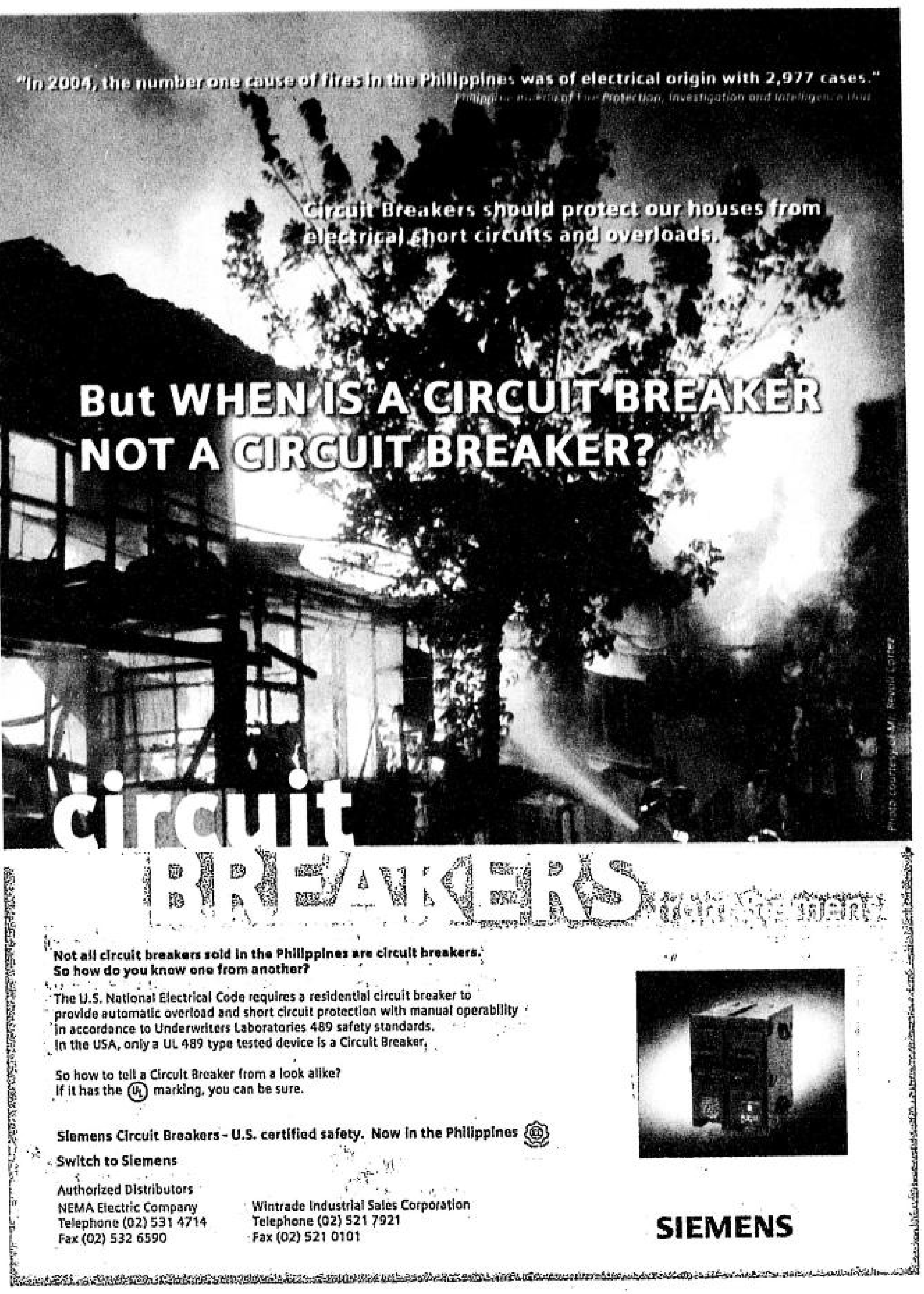
Education Secretary Florencio Abad had earlier said they had noticed the trend of students in private schools moving to the public schools because of the prohibitive tuition.

The DepEd reported that the increase in transferees from private to public schools in the elementary level was half a percent of the total student population. The number went up in the public high schools which reported an increase of 4.4 percent in transferees.

The department has called on the government to increase its budget so it could meet the needs of an ever-increasing student population in public schools.

Abad also noted that every year, the DepEd subsidizes the tuition of deserving students in private schools to the tune of P4,000 per student. This, he said, would ensure the viability of the private schools, decongest the public schools, and save the government some money.

He explained that the government needs to spend around P573,000 per class of 50 students. Sending the same number of students to private schools would only cost the government P200,000 in subsidies.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Nene to testify at Erap's trial

By Nelson F. Flores

SENATE Minority Leader Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel Jr. is set to testify today before the Special Division of the Sandiganbayan hearing the plunder charges against deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Pimentel, the 39th defense witness, said he would testify about the controversial second envelope presented during the Senate impeachment trial of Estrada, which "would weaken the prosecution's case against the former president."

"I will be asked to recall what happened during the impeachment trial of President Estrada," Pimentel said.

Defense counsel Jose Flaminiano said Pimentel's testimony would bolster their claim that the plunder charges filed against Estrada were politically motivated.

Flaminiano said the testimony of the lawmaker would complement the earlier open court declaration by former Chief Justice Andres Narvasa Sr., who testified in favor of Estrada.

In his testimony, Narvasa said that President Macapagal-Arroyo, through then Secretary of Justice Hernani Perez, tried to convince Estrada to go into voluntary exile in exchange for immunity from criminal suits. He said Ms Arroyo also asked Estrada to submit his resignation letter and medical certificate attesting to his need to undergo medical treatment abroad.

Flaminiano said Narvasa's testimony only proved that politics was behind the filing of charges against Estrada. He said that if his client was guilty of the charges against him, then Ms Arroyo would not have tried to make a deal.

"Estrada could have just left to avoid the humiliation of being hauled off to court, but he did not," Flaminiano said.

Meanwhile, Flaminiano lamented Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio's claim that the defense panel was running out of witnesses. He said Villa-Ignacio was being "unprofessional" with his claim.

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Catch a 'jueteng' lord first before we text . . .

From page A1

ting would achieve, besides polishing up the tattered police image, is to enrich the cell phone companies, the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas said.

"Unless they can catch a big fish, all these moves ... are just public relations," KMP information officer Carl Ala said on the phone.

A day after declaring that Luzon was now virtually free of jueteng, the Philippine National Police urged the people to text 2920 to report any jueteng operations in their communities.

Senior Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil, PNP spokesperson, said the illegal numbers racket could only truly be stopped if the people supported the campaign against it.

Text 2920 is primarily an anti-crime reporting system. Bataoil said the police were maximizing its use now that they were in the thick of an anti-illegal gambling campaign.

Witnesses under threat

But Ala claimed the police seemed to be passing the buck to the people, rather than doing the legwork themselves.

With the way things were going, Ala said there was no assurance that the texters or witnesses could be assured of their safety if they divulged what they knew of jueteng operations.

Ala cited a statement by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez last week threatening to file charges against three supposed jueteng insiders who had said they were involved in paying off some government officials and that the beneficiaries allegedly included some members of the First Family.

Futile exercise?

"The police should catch a jueteng lord. Otherwise, texting the PNP is just an exercise in futility," Ala said. "We're just making the cell phone companies richer while the gambling lords are never put in jail."

Bataoil conceded that going after jueteng lords was difficult, but this did not mean that the police were not trying.

"Getting them is an ongoing operation," he said, but in the same breath, he asked: "What evidence can you gather now if there is no more operations?"

"We are continuing our efforts, but we need the community in this campaign," he added.

Where's paper trail?

Chief Supt. Florante Baguio, head of the police's Special Anti-Illegal Gambling Task Force, said one difficulty police were facing was that there was no "paper trail" linking gambling lords to their illegal activities.

Also, gambling lords do not personally handle jueteng operations so they are unlikely to be caught during raids, Baguio said.

He said one of the few ways of nailing them was for someone who knew them to "squeal" on them.

Tax records

"What we really need is testimonial evidence. We need witnesses," he said.

Baguio urged people to come out and help the police, adding that the safety of witnesses was assured once they were admitted into the justice department's witness protection program.

Another way is to look into the suspected gambling lords' tax records and see whether they had been delinquent or had misdeclared their incomes, Bataoil said.

"The Bureau of Internal Revenue is already doing that," he said.

Earlier, Director Vidal Querol, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, said that going after tax cheats was easier than putting jueteng lords in jail.

"They [tax evaders] have paper trails," he said.

Mike A back, to face probe of 'jueteng'

From page A1

they are once again using the power of their political office to vilify the First Gentleman. Since he is a private person, we can only urge them to present their evidence so that the public will know that he has once again been unfairly pilloried, all in the name of partisan politics," Santos said in a statement.

Arroyo appeared in good spirits when he emerged from Gate 5 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. He arrived at 6:19 p.m. on board Cathay Pacific Flight CX-90.

He was met by his children, Dato and Luli, two granddaughters and Santos. They stayed for about 10 minutes in the presidential lounge before leaving the Naia.

Santos said despite the "damaging insinuations" made by Arroyo's critics, they "have failed to show any shred of evidence to back up their allegations."

"They are same group that has besmirched Attorney Arroyo with similarly malicious accusations before, all of which were subsequently proven to be utterly false."

Responsible lawmakers

"We pray that our more responsible legislators, whether administration or opposition, would be enlightened and guided by the interest of our people, and a genuine search for truth and justice in their hearts," he added.

Santos said Arroyo came from a private trip. The lawyer said his client was ready to face any inquiry and that his conscience was clear.

The beleaguered presidential spouse left for Singapore on May 20.

Santos then had said the First Gentleman was just on a "short vacation" with his brother Rep. Ignacio "Iggy" Arroyo and sister Marilou.

The trip was planned as early as January, Santos had said.

Payola beneficiaries

Archbishop Cruz said he had as many as eight witnesses who were ready to show up at the probe and name some of the people protecting and benefiting from the P13-billion-a-year underground lottery system.

The controversy over alleged jueteng payoffs—an issue that brought down President Joseph Estrada five years ago—has drawn more headlines than news that the country's economy was picking up.

"The important thing here is for the public to know up to where the jueteng payola reaches," Cruz said. "Definitely, they [the witnesses] can implicate people well beyond the level of congressmen."

Among Cruz's witnesses is someone who had purportedly preserved his testimony on video tape. The bishop said the man wanted to make sure that the senators and the public heard his story in case anything happened to him.

Extent of payola

Cruz, head of the Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng, said his witnesses were ready to testify on the involvement of "people on the national level" and how much they allegedly received in monthly payola.

A confessed jueteng collector and two alleged bagmen had claimed in interviews with some media people less than two weeks ago that they had collected jueteng protection money for the the First Gentleman and his elder son.

At least one of them said, however, that he had no proof that the money actually reached its supposed intended beneficiary.

Cruz said his witnesses also had the "goods" on people at the provincial and regional levels who were allegedly involved in illegal gambling.

The bishop refused to name any of his witnesses until they had actually appeared before the Senate. He said their testimony had been preserved in individual affidavits now in the safekeeping of a close ally.

At safehouses

The witnesses are kept in different safe houses, fearing retribution from former partners in crime, Cruz said.

"They are deeply involved in the jueteng circle," he said, suggesting that some of them could either be bet collectors or jueteng operators. "They know each other because they moved in the same circles."

Some of the witnesses have already been named in news reports, Cruz said. All are male belonging to the middle and lower-middle class brackets, he said.

Cruz earlier furnished a congressional committee a list of 16 known jueteng operators allegedly remitting P19.6 million in monthly payola to a top Philippine National Police official.

He submitted a copy of the list to a Department of Justice committee looking into the scandal. Another copy reached Senate Minority Floor Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., the INQUIRER has learned.

Who is 'Ngo-Ngo?'

Asked if a certain "Ngo-Ngo" was among his witnesses, Cruz said no.

Ngo-ngo, allegedly one of two jueteng lords operating in Pampanga, earlier informed the bishop that he was willing to testify before the Senate, a source has told the INQUIRER.

The source said Ngo-Ngo had tried to reach the bishop through at least two go-betweens, but reportedly backed out at the last minute.

Even without Ngo-Ngo, Cruz was confident that his eight witnesses would give substantial testimonies before the Senate and even before a court of law.

Ready for inquiry

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye reiterated that the First Gentleman would attend the Senate inquiry if invited.

"The First Gentleman is not the type of person who would dodge this kind of thing," Bunye said over RMN radio.

Sen. Manuel Villar, chair of the committee on public order and co-chair of the Senate inquiry, yesterday rebuffed suggestions by some colleagues that the chamber terminate its hearing after today, saying this would constitute "a mockery of the investigation."

The inquiry will look into claims that the popular poor man's lottery continued to flourish and that public officials and private individuals had been receiving huge payoffs from its operations.

Resource persons

For today's joint hearing, the Senate committee on public order and illegal drugs and committee on games, amusement and sports have invited six "resource persons," including Cruz.

Villar warned against the early termination of the inquiry.

"If we do that, we might become the butt of jokes. We have to do this thing properly," he said in a phone interview. "We're conducting this hearing with an open mind and objectivity. You can't make a conclusion on the first hearing."

Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, chair of the games committee and Villar's co-chair in the inquiry, had said that the investigation could be terminated after the first hearing if members of both committees were amenable to this.

Also invited to today's hearing were PNP Director General Arturo Lomibao, Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes, Efraim Genuino of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., Sergio Valencia of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office and Bohol Rep. Erico Aumentado of the Union of Local Authorities of the Philippines. *With a report from TJ Burgonio*

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Dark stories born in delivery rooms

From page A1

a top medical school in Manila, had also performed "total abdominal hysterectomy" on an unsuspecting mother after she delivered her sixth baby by ceasarian section, the source said.

He had removed her uterus.

When the mother woke up, the doctor told her he had to perform hysterectomy because she was bleeding profusely, the source said. "But she was never bleeding."

First order of the day

The case shocked incoming Health Secretary Francisco Duque III who said he would immediately order an investigation when he assumes office on Wednesday.

"Really? Wow!" he told the INQUIRER in an interview. "I will immediately have it investigated. It'll be the first order of the day."

Duque was particularly shocked with the doctor who removed the patient's uterus without her consent. "That's not right. That's illegal. He can't do that," he said.

He was surprised that these things were happening at Fabella Hospital, considering that Manila Mayor Lito Atienza was a fierce enemy of artificial contraception.

Perennially pregnant

Lawyer Carolina Ruiz Austria of the Reproductive Health Advocacy Network told the INQUIRER that she was aware of similar incidents occurring at Fabella Hospital, as well as in another institution in the city.

She said some of the people in these two government hospitals were particularly harsh with patients who tried to have their pregnancies aborted.

"I know of one instance when a woman was made to wear a sign which read, 'I tried to get an abortion,'" Austria recalled.

But while this purported case condemned abortion, some of the health workers in the Manila hospital demonstrated outright disdain for "perennially pregnant women."

No anesthesia

These patients who have ignored the constant badgering were usually in for some form of "punishment" during labor, according to the INQUIRER sources.

One source cited an instance when a mother was refused anesthesia during episiotomy, a procedure which involves cutting the vaginal opening of a woman in labor.

The cut is usually an inch or two long.

Besides the common bedside rebuke, perennially pregnant mothers would get more scoldings during the pelvic exam usually the day after delivery, the source said.

"For once, use your brain! Be responsible! How will you feed so many children?" health workers allegedly told mothers lining up for checkups.

Not-so-special delivery

A third source, a former nursing trainee at the hospital, said he witnessed similar cases while working there for a month last year.

"I was shocked," he told the INQUIRER on Saturday. "It wasn't what we were taught in school about patient care. It was completely the opposite."

He recalled one instance when a mother delivered her eighth baby on a stretcher before she could be transferred to the delivery table.

"The nurses got mad and said, 'Why didn't you tell us the baby was about to come out?'" he narrated.

To punish the woman, the nurses allegedly told her to move to the delivery table by herself.

"Imagine the pain. You've just delivered [a baby] and you're asked to move with no assistance whatsoever," the source said.

No qualms

In contrast, some doctors were allegedly more accommodating of women seeking what could almost be considered an abortion.

The former nursing trainee said he saw one female doctor perform dilation and curettage, more commonly known as *raspa* to a pregnant entertainer in her 20s.

"She was pregnant, I think for several weeks already, and she didn't want the baby because she had to return to Japan," he recalled. "The doctor had no qualms about doing the procedure. She killed the baby simply because the mother didn't want it."

'Be Honest' campaign takes off for parts south

By Madonna T. Virola
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

CITY OF CALAPAN—The Brotherhood of Christian Businessmen and Professionals (BCBP), a Catholic renewal organization recognized by the archdiocese of Manila, is planning to take its "Be Honest" campaign public.

The campaign involves linking activities like lifestyle checks, procurement, monitoring, training on the value of honesty, accountability, good governance, integrity and transparency to one's life.

"Even if others are not, will not and cannot, to be honest is our personal response to the worsening corruption in the country," said Mario Alba, BCBP mission director, during a two-hour breakfast meeting here on Saturday morning.

The "Be Honest" campaign was started in April last year but only as internal project of the BCBP, serving as an assignment to its members as part of BCBP's advocacy.

Owing to the success of the project, the BCBP made it an outreach project to, among other areas, Calapan City.

In January, BCBP president Manolet Siojo signed a memorandum of agreement with Barug!, a nongovernment organization which was represented by Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Vidal, to undertake the campaign here.

About 50 local businessmen and professionals are involved in the campaign.

"We must first judge ourselves. This is a self-check," said Siojo in his message in the BCBP's souvenir program.

After the Tagaytay National Planning meet in January next year, other activities lined up for 2006 to 2010 are a marketplace evangelization program, and pro-poor outreach, leadership formation and family programs.

The BCBP celebrated its 25th anniversary on Saturday in Cebu.

The organization was founded on July 30, 1980, by 12 businessmen during a breakfast-prayer meeting in Makati City.

It has expanded to eight chapters in Metro Manila and nearly 100 chapters throughout the country with around 25,000 members.

Alba admitted the group was vulnerable to being used by those with vested interests since they don't screen their members.

"But it's between them and God. We are after providing an environment conducive to being honest and having a personal relationship with God. We make people think twice about what they are doing," he said.

Alba gave his own testimony about what it means to "Be Honest". He said that last December, his wife, who was driving his car, met a vehicular accident.

His broker advised him to execute an affidavit saying the car was damaged while it was parked in order to speed up the paperwork on the insurance claim.

"While I was going to do it, my son reminded me about the 'Be Honest' campaign and saved me from committing a sin. With God helping out, I got the insurance money before Christmas. He helps if we ask Him."

"It's a challenge to wear the T-shirt 'Be Honest'," said some BCBP members, because of the expectations on them.

Rolly Garcia, of the Quezon City chapter and a retired policeman, said that since his income was not enough to support his family, he had gotten into "monkey business" or extortion, gambling, drinking and womanizing.

With some senior policemen, he would order coffee from a Chinese he called "Ka Bise" and didn't pay for it.

"When I joined BCBP, I promised Ka Bise that I would pay for my coffee. Ka Bise said he'd also stop spitting in the coffee he served me," said Garcia, drawing laughter in the breakfast forum.

Member Ned de Guzman related how a police provincial director in dire need of money, because of his involvement with BCBP, was able to refuse millions of pesos in bribes to allow ambulances carrying illegal drugs to pass through his jurisdiction.

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YWCA MEET
The Young Women's Christian Association of the Philippines held recently its 30th mid-biennium meeting at the Great Eastern Hotel in Makati City with the theme: "Women's Development in the 3rd Millennium." Seated, from left, are Dean Grace A. Agustin, vice president for finance; Villa Granada de Guia, chair, MBM/NBC committee; Dr. Amalia R. Gomez, VP, program and membership; Dr. Josefina D. Pineda, national president; Dr. Eun Kyung Park, World YWCA vice president; former Sen. Leticia Ramos-Shahani, past president, and Irene M. Josue, youth council president. Standing, from left, are past national presidents Dr. Ligaya L. Tankeh, Teodora B. Reyes, Justice Rizalina S.B. Vera, Rosario R. Villar and lawyer Rachel E. Fidelino. Not in photo is Dr. Cindy D. Ang, VP, administration and management.

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MILF reports presence of 2 Japanese soldiers

From page A1

episode might be a hoax and a news report in Tokyo that the purported stragglers were being held by armed men for a ransom of 25 million yen ($232,000).

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview that the Moro guerrilla group was "willing to coordinate" with Japanese diplomats to locate the two men "in the name of humanity."

However, he said the MILF could only begin work on locating the pair on May 31, after the three-day consultation meeting with its members and sympathizers in Sultan Kudarat town in Maguindanao. *(See story on Page A2.)*

Kabalu said information from MILF field commanders indicated that a Japanese soldier was living at the foot of Mount Matutum in Sarangani and another on Balut Island in Davao del Sur. It was unclear if he was referring to the two elderly men that the Japanese diplomats were tracking down.

"I am convinced the story is a hoax," said Pedro Juachon, a retired Air Force general who led a team of Philippine soldiers in tracking down Hiroo Onoda, the last known Japanese straggler from the war in the Philippines, in 1974.

A former Japanese Army intelligence officer, Onoda was found living in the jungle on Lubang Island in Mindoro. He was unaware of Japan's defeat in 1945.

Ransom

In Tokyo, the Mainichi Shimbun, one of Japan's major newspapers, said Filipino rebels were demanding 25 million yen in exchange for delivering the two men to Japanese authorities. The report cited as a source a Mindanao-based Japanese trader who broke the story of the purported stragglers.

An official from Tokyo's health ministry was expected to join four staff members from its embassy in Manila, who had been waiting for three days in General Santos to meet with the trader to discuss arrangements to get the two men out of the mountains they had reportedly been hiding in for 60 years.

"We will continue to wait for confirmation," said Shuhei Ogawa, the Japanese Embassy spokesperson. "We will continue to arrange an appointment with the two men. There is no deadline. It's important to get a confirmation."

No credible proof

There had been no credible proof the two elderly men exist, three days after the stragglers' story broke in Japan. Media named the pair as Yoshio Yamakawa, 87, from the western city of Osaka, and Tsuzuki Nakauchi, 85, and said they could be the first cases in 30 years of wartime stragglers being found.

Philippine police officials also doubted the reported presence of war-time stragglers in the mountains near General Santos.

"All the information about these stragglers is hearsay," said Robert Kunisala, head of the regional police's intelligence office.

"We would like to caution everybody this might be a big scam. There are kidnap gangs operating near the mountains and the stragglers' story could be the bait," he said.

He said the police had briefed embassy officials on the security and personal safety situation outside the city, especially near the mountains, a stronghold of communist and Moro rebels and kidnappers.

On Saturday, Japanese Embassy officials posted a note outside the hotel where they were staying warning reporters not to leave the city and go off on their own near the mountains.

A horde of foreign journalists, mostly from Japan, has descended on Mindanao, but some are now starting to doubt the story after the trader, who only gave his name as Asano, began asking for money in exchange for information.

A member of a Japanese television network said Asano, the only source for the story, even offered to sell video of the two stragglers. Some Japanese reporters said that Asano was also asking for money to cover his expenses in locating the stragglers.

Another Japanese reporter said Asano told them he had paid $50,000 to the people holding the stragglers, whom he described as guerrillas. The amount was about five times the original price after the stragglers' story was flashed on local newspapers and national television stations in the Philippines.

Japanese media played up the story of the former soldiers prominently at home, showing footage of Japanese troops during the war but not touching on the brutal occupation that is believed to have left as many as one million Filipinos dead.

Lubang stragglers

Juachon, the retired Filipino general, was a young captain in 1974 when Onoda was found living in the Lubang jungle. He led the search team that brought back the Japanese Army intelligence officer from his mountain hideout.

"We knew of the presence of Japanese stragglers in Lubang as early as the 1960s because of reported sightings from the island's residents," Juachon said, recalling an incident in 1961 when police traded gunfire with Onoda and a companion.

"I myself saw him one time when he burned down a farmer's house. I really could not believe it when I saw him and a companion, in Japanese military uniform, fleeing from the scene, the glow of the burning house illuminating them."

Death of a companion

Unlike the latest reported case of wartime stragglers in Mindanao, Juachon said Onoda and his companion were cut off from the outside world, relying on their survival skills. Sometimes, they would steal grain from local farmers living near their hideout.

But after the death of his companion, it had become difficult for Onoda to survive alone, he said.

In 1974, Onoda surfaced after he met a Japanese student who camped out on the island. One night, he approached the startled student and allowed himself to be photographed. The next day, the student was in Tokyo reporting his discovery.

A week later, he returned with some Japanese government officials—including a former superior officer who convinced Onoda to surrender, telling him the war had ended 29 years earlier.

"Onoda's case was very much different from the story I read in the newspapers about two stragglers in Mindanao," said Juachon. "I find it difficult to believe this new case." ***Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau, with reports from* INQUIRER *wires***

RP democracy still unstable

From page A1

Discontinuities have left a legacy of political instability that has made the restored Philippine democracy after Marcos vulnerable up to this day to recurrent calls to abbreviate presidential constitutional terms through coup d'etat, people power or some form of military intervention. Estrada was toppled after only three years in office. Subsequently, President Arroyo encountered a rebellion by a rabble that attacked Malacañang on May 1, 2001, barely five months after she took office. Then there was the mutiny led by young military officers in July 2003, with their seizure of the Oakwood apartments in Makati.

Since then and even after her election in May 2004, Ms Arroyo has been buffeted by a flurry of coup plots. Despite a history of failed coup attempts since the Aquino administration, the vocabulary of political change in the country has been defined by two words—coup and people power.

Fragility of institutions

The latest manifestation of the clamor for a coup was the call issued by a group led by retired Maj. Gen. and former Defense Secretary Fortunato Abat for the overthrow of the Arroyo administration and its replacement with a transition revolutionary government.

Such a call, coming from retired generals, reflects the fragility of democratic institutions that ought to be the cornerstone of political stability.

This should warn the Arroyo administration that it sits on shaky ground seeded with myriad causes of unrest—including the widespread perception of corruption in government, endemic poverty aggravated by rising prices, breakdown of law and order, and perception of a weak government that invites armed challenges, coup conspiracies and disobedience to its authority.

Abat's call, together with the clamor for a revival of strongman rule associated with retired generals, should warn the civilian sector about the danger of the military intervening to restore public order and state authority.

A situation arising from the collapse of government and its paralysis by constant impasse in the formal institutions of democracy—i.e., between the legislature and the executive and within the legislature itself—is as imminent as it was during the late 1980s when the Aquino administration was rocked by seven coup attempts.

With the second Arroyo administration still under cloud due to allegations of fraud in the 2004 presidential election and charges of corruption stemming from alleged payoffs from "jueteng" operators, there are more than enough grievances which can be used by the military and others seeking to topple the regime in quick time, to fuel public discontent and unrest.

2 coup themes

The recent flurry of coup plotting is defined by two themes—mass mobilization of another people power and military intervention, either direct seizure of state power or withdrawal of military support from the government.

The second scenario assumes the collapse of government, deriving a model from the 2001 military defection from the Estrada administration.

The replication of people power scenarios (both Edsa I and Edsa II) in 2005 faces problems. The biggest problem is that they are not replicable unless there is a reproduction of events or convergence of events that led to the toppling of Marcos and Estrada.

The issues that brought down Marcos and Estrada are different and don't exist today. Based on the announced manifestoes of the Oakwood mutineers and the Abat cabal, their plots were fatally flawed by the fact that their blueprints are drawn on templates of Edsa I and Edsa II.

Edsa I and Edsa II succeeded because the military mutinies or defection were favored by the public mood. There was mass support for the defection of Gen. Angelo Reyes and the general staff against President Estrada. The Oakwood mutiny failed because the military rebels assumed public insurrection would follow.

Current plotters believe the jueteng scandal and the still lingering question of alleged widespread fraud in the 2004 presidential election would trigger events that would mobilize angry protests in the streets of a size that would encourage generals and colonels in the active service either to take power or withdraw support from the government.

These plots seem to be based on the wishful thinking, on assumption of a public mood ready to be mobilized for mass action, on the assumption that allegations of corruption over jueteng payoffs, discontent over hard times, and the breakdown of law and order are sufficient to send people to the streets to demand the overthrow of the Arroyo administration and for the military to step in.

It is doubtful whether the level of mass discontent and grievances has reached a point where the public is ready for calls for mass mobilization, to justify military intervention. Moreover, the plotters' big problem is that they cannot muster the troops to seize power.

Review of events

A careful review of the events leading to Edsa I and Edsa II shows that at present, there is no environment to trigger a political explosion.

Edsa I had a long fuse before it exploded in 1986. The fuse was lighted in 1983 by ex-Sen. Benigno Aquino's assassination.

The Enrile-Ramos mutiny was another spark. But the triggering event of Edsa I was the flagrant stealing by Marcos of the 1985 snap election. It ignited the protest rally attended by a million people at Rizal Park and Cory Aquino's call for a boycott of Marcos crony enterprises.

Current plotters seem to assume that the jueteng scandal could trigger another series of events that could scuttle the government, such as in the case of the jueteng exposé of Ilocos Gov. Chavit Singson on Estrada's direct involvement in the jueteng payoff.

The exposé softened the ground for Estrada's impeachment. But the jueteng issue had lost wind mid-way in the impeachment trial and had become exhausted and prospects of Estrada's acquittal were bright.

The flash point came with Clarissa Ocampo's testimony on the secret Jose Velarde bank account, said to be Estrada's.

What ignited the mass movement in Edsa II was the suppression by the impeachment tribunal of the evidence on the Velarde account. It was the mass mobilization that gave Reyes the opportunity to defect from the Estrada administration.

Not sure-fire model

Thus, the jueteng trigger for Estrada's fall is not a sure-fire model upon which to plot a coup feeding on the current jueteng scandal and even public discontent over other issues.

Plotting a coup using a template or stenciling model without reproducing the circumstances and contexts in which a coup had succeeded cannot ensure duplication of results.

Further, plotters have to read correctly the public mood, whether it would back a coup. They also must determine whether the time is ripe for a move.

Any misjudgment and miscalculation on these issues could be fatal not only to the coup, but worse to the country because of the political and economic setback it would suffer from a reckless power bid.

If President Arroyo stays in office longer than what the plotters want, they have to read the signs clearly that the configuration of events favor their enterprise.

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Ombudsman to go after officials abetting dumps

By Nelson F. Flores

THE OFFICE of the Ombudsman will go after public officials violating environmental laws, including those who fail to close illegal dumpsites.

"The serious implementation of Republic Act No. 9003 (the Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000) and other ecological laws is long overdue," said Wilbert Candelaria, Environmental Ombudsman.

Candelaria, who is also the Ombudsman for Luzon, issued the statement after signing a memorandum of agreement with the Ecological Waste Coalition (EWC). He said the MOA signing was timely since the destruction of the environment was a major national security problem.

"With the MOA in place and the help of environmental groups, the Office of the Ombudsman can file cases easily," Candelaria said.

Joey Papa, EWC coordinator, said the group would target open dumpsites to stop their proliferation. He said open dumpsites were serious health hazards.

"They (open dumpsites) emit toxic gases, enter our water systems, cause respiratory illnesses like asthma, and contribute to the greenhouse effect which is the cause of the abnormal weather patterns worldwide," Papa said.

Papa said that aside from helping the Office of the Ombudsman, the MOA signing would also pave the way for the EWC to "explore and encourage alternative methods of waste management like recycling, segregation and composting."

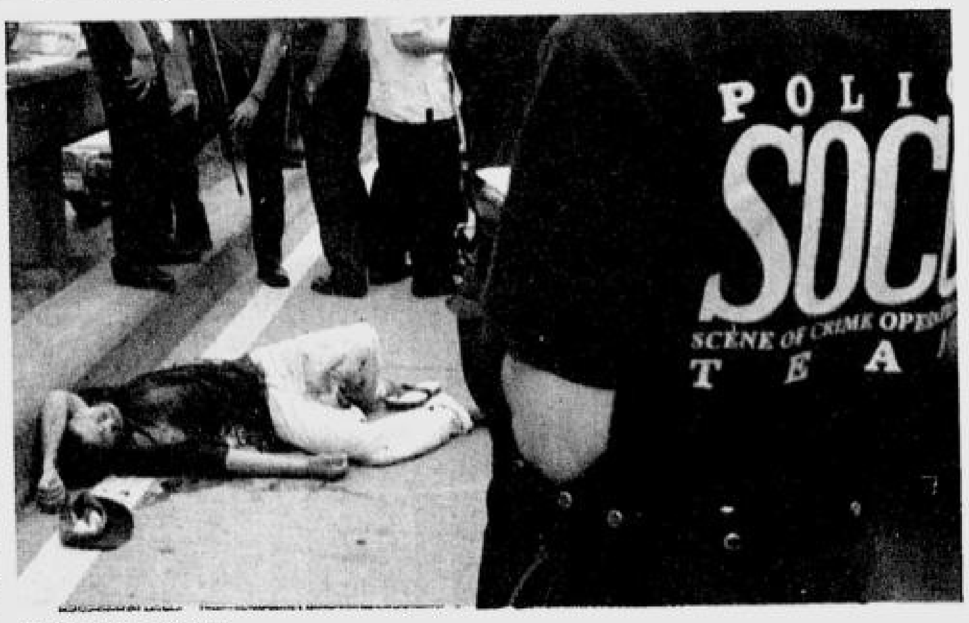
The EWC is composed of Greenpeace, the Global Alliance for Incinerator Alternatives (GAIA) and the archdiocese of Manila.

Cabanatuan City residents, meanwhile, with the help of the EWC asked the Office of the Ombudsman to look into the failure of local government officials to close an illegal dumpsite in the city.

According to a two-page complaint filed by five city residents, the Valle Cruz dumpsite has been emitting toxic wastes that pose a health hazard to residents of the city and nearby provinces.

The complainants said that despite several meetings with city government officials, the latter had yet to act on the matter.

With Reagan Tan



IT NEVER PAYS
One of three men who tried to rob jeepney passengers on Aurora Blvd., Quezon City, yesterday morning lies dead after being shot by a passenger who turned out to be an off-duty policeman. One accomplice was arrested while the other managed to escape.
(Story in Metro, Page A24)
RYAN LIM

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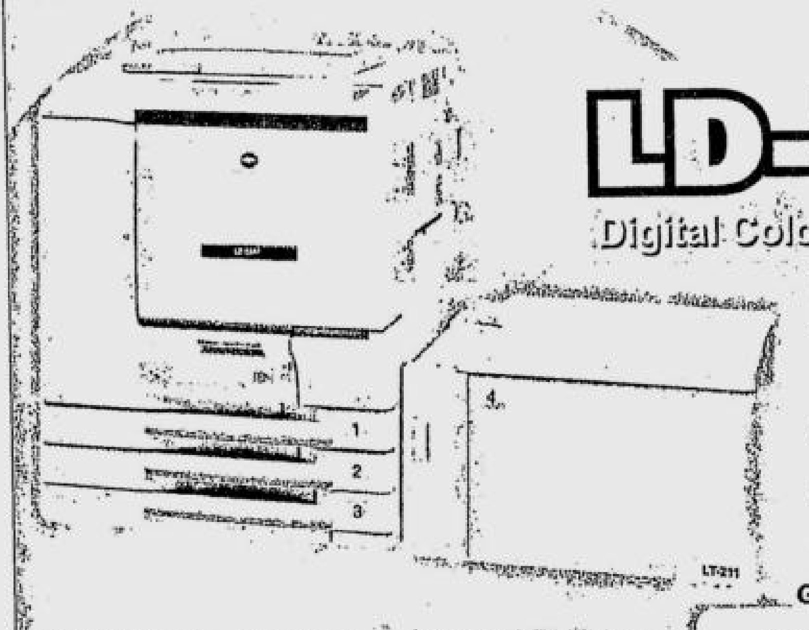

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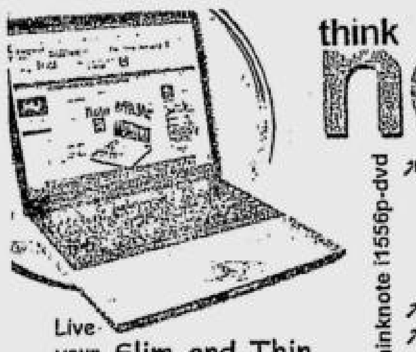

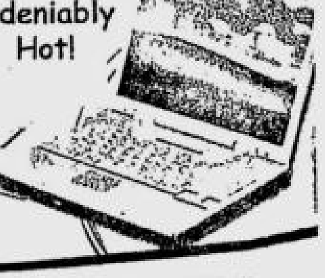

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Townsfolk protect 'Nemo,' friends

From page A1

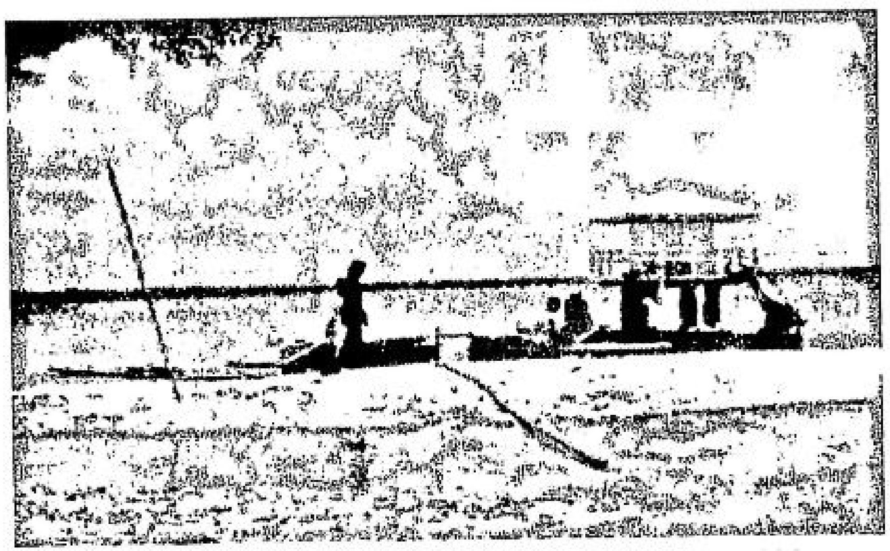
Caasi took the INQUIRER to where clownfish abound—a shallow area (about three feet deep) from the shore—and lifted a rock which revealed "dancing" anemones.

Cavorting among the anemones' tentacles were several clownfish. Several tourists played near a sandbar, enjoying the clear waters, seemingly oblivious to the beautiful fishes around them.

"We allow tourists to come and swim here, but definitely there's no taking [of] marine resources," said Caasi.

The residents said the sandbar would change shape and position, depending on the season and the waves.

"You see that guard house? Sometimes the sandbar is on that side. Sometimes, it's on the other side," said Myra Caido, a municipal government employee.



AT THE Panacalan fish sanctuary, tourists take a break on a sandbar which changes shape and position depending on the waves and the season.

RAY B. ZAMBRANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Turtle sighting

On another part of the sandbar, a footlong sea turtle with a red carapace or shell had been accidentally caught by a fisherman from Sablig. It was the first time local fishermen had seen a red sea turtle.

Since it was Saturday, the sea turtle was brought to a pond near the rest house of Mayor Nestor Pulido and his wife Alice, a member of the provincial board.

"We will release it on Monday," Pulido said.

Sanctuary

The Panacalan fish sanctuary was established five years ago by the local government and managed by officials and residents of Barangays Macaleeng and Sablig.

Since then, the fishermen have taken the word *sanktwaryo* (sanctuary) to heart. Fiercely protective of the fish sanctuary, residents take turns patrolling the area against unscrupulous fishermen who violate its "sacredness."

The Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources has given them radio equipment so they could easily go after violators.

Through the years, the number of violators has dwindled, presumably because the fishermen have realized the importance of the sanctuary to their livelihood.

The fish catch has also increased.

"Before, the daily harvest of a fisherman was less than a kilo of fish. Now, a fisherman can catch at least three kilos," said Fidel Camino, 50, a *bantay dagat*.

Coral cover, too, has grown. Belmore Bugawan, the man in charge of the coastal resources management of the BFAR in the Ilocos region, said the coral cover in the sanctuary was "slowly thickening."

In the past, illegal fishermen used homemade explosives and cyanide and slowly destroyed most of the corals.

The Anda sea water is home to branching and table corals, including soft corals like anemones. At least six families of fish of different species can be found in the area, according to Bugawan.

The BFAR has also introduced seaweed farming to the fisherfolk as an alternative livelihood. Seaweeds, like corals, serve as fish shelter.

There's also sea urchin culture, another source of income.

"The sea is kind to us if we protect it. The sea will take care of us—we will not go hungry—if we take care of it," a fisherman said.

Pulido said he planned to put up large aquariums near the town proper where different marine resources would be displayed.

"It would be one way of educating people, of reminding them of our rich natural resources. They, too, could do their part in protecting the beauty of our town," he said.

Reforestation

The local government has also started mangrove reforestation programs in different coastal villages. In Barangay Imbo, more than 10,000 hectares have been reforested by villagers.

"They have to clean the area, or seaweeds will smother the roots and young mangroves will die," Pulido said.

Some mangrove reforestation projects are fenced with nets to keep seaweeds away.

Late last year, a municipal mangrove nursery was established by the local government with the support of the Sagip Lingayen Gulf project, a nongovernment organization based at the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute. The nursery is managed by the Poblacion Multi-Sectoral Organization.

Even students play a role to help regain the lost beauty of Anda.

Preserving the ecology

The Samahan ng mga Mangingisda sa Cabungan (Samaca) coordinates with the barangay in integrating the Citizens' Army Training (CAT) of senior high school students in the mangrove reforestation project.

By participating in the planting of mangroves, students are given credit in the community service component of the CAT.

"It is sad that Anda lost most of its mangrove forests when they were converted to fishponds—a result of the fishpond lease agreement program of the national government. But we are trying our best to reforest some logged areas and, so far, we are succeeding," Pulido said.

In the local language, "anda" means beautiful. The Pulidos are determined to make Anda live up to its name.

But as they make this island town beautiful again, the Pulidos, with the cooperation of the villagers, are making sure that the town's pristine ecology is preserved and protected.

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60-room AFP resort being built on Boracay

From page A1

source privy to military construction projects.

The project has fueled criticism of Abu and his "puzzling priorities" that emerged after he issued an order in January to replace the paved sidewalks in Camp Aguinaldo with decorative tiles and repair its roofing for P19 million.

The AFP is going ahead with the construction of the resort even after President Macapagal-Arroyo ordered all government agencies to implement austerity measures in the face of the looming fiscal crisis.

"Soldiers can live without sidewalks or a recreation center in Boracay, but they could die without medical kits," resigned Army Capt. Rene Jarque said, citing the case of his classmate, Lt. Col. Dennis Villanueva, who succumbed to battle wounds for lack of emergency medical aid.

According to Jarque, Abu should have asked himself if "the hotel was good for the morale and welfare of the soldier, or good only for the morale and welfare of the generals and the contractors."

Resort complex

The resort complex, when completed, would consist of two three-story buildings with 30 air-conditioned rooms each, a bean-shaped swimming pool and a separate rest house for the AFP chief of staff and other senior commanders. The scale model of the complex also showed two pavilions which would serve as administrative offices.

At least 10 rooms furnished with bamboo cabinets and chairs, modest by Boracay standards, were already available for guests when the INQUIRER visited the area on May 13. Occupants were military officers on vacation or attending a counterterrorism exercise conducted by Task Force Stingray.

Room rates

The room rates are priced according to the rank of the soldiers and officers.

As AFP chief of staff, Abu, for instance, will have to pay P1,250 per day, which is based on 5 percent of his base pay, while a brigadier general would be charged P1,013.97.

The pro-rated fees will also apply to enlisted personnel, with the chief master sergeant paying P548.60 while a technical sergeant would pay P403. Military draftees will be charged P246.60 per day.

While the room rates are affordable, the transportation cost of traveling to Boracay, which ranges from P2,000 by boat to P7,000 by plane, is regarded as prohibitive and beyond the reach of ordinary soldiers.

The resort is one of the construction projects Abu launched since he replaced Gen. Narciso Abaya, who retired on Oct. 29. Within a month, Abu had his office and his official quarters, known in Camp Aguinaldo as the White House, renovated reportedly at a cost of P9 million, said one AFP source who requested anonymity for fear of reprisal from superior officers.

Other projects

Another project is to install air-conditioning units at the St. Ignatius chapel, the source said, adding that initial estimates have been made.

But landscaping holds a special interest for Abu, the source said, pointing to the general's order to replace the paved sidewalks with red tiles and to cut down cypress trees along Gen. Capinpin Avenue, a main street in Camp Aguinaldo, and replace them with potted plants.

Abu's project to renovate the sidewalks has caused grumbling among soldiers who see the project as ill-timed.

Even AFP Vice Chief of Staff Vice Admiral Ariston de los Reyes has objected to Abu's plan, saying that replacing the paved sidewalks with decorative tiles "for aesthetic purposes" may not be in keeping with the times.

AFP Deputy Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan, however, defended Abu. According to Adan, Abu has the prerogative to choose which projects to prioritize and nobody should question the decision of the AFP chief of staff.

"That's why he is there to determine what to prioritize," Adan said.

Adan said the sidewalk renovation would also "benefit everyone and the price was reasonable."

Public information officer Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual said the project cost only P5.5 million, and would not include the renovation of the sidewalk roofs which would cost a total of P19 million as the INQUIRER had reported.

Common denominator

Retired military officials said constructions and renovations were not new in the vocabulary of AFP chiefs of staff.

"The common denominator is money," a retired major general, who had served as a division commander in Mindanao, told the INQUIRER.

He pointed to the AFP Museum and Multipurpose Building built in 1995 by then AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Arturo Enrile, who died in 1998. It was later converted into a theater and cultural center for lease to private companies to raise funds for its upkeep.

Enrile was succeeded by Gen. Arnulfo Acedera, who left behind a concrete canopy in front the the GHQ building as a legacy of his 13-month term. The canopy reportedly cost P250 million, though until today, it is not clear where the funds had come from.

Succeeding chiefs of staff would also have their own construction projects, including a new wing in a military hospital, ostensibly for the welfare of the soldiers, and the repair of the altar at the military chapel, presumably to promote the spiritual health of the men in uniform.

With a report from Luige A. del Puerto

Ill Sino ship's cook airlifted to Manila

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SICK head cook of a Chinese research vessel was airlifted from the ship and brought to a Manila hospital yesterday morning by the Philippine Coast Guard's aviation group.

The cook, identified as Xu Zukui, had been ill since Friday but was only taken off the M/V Xiang Yang Hung 09 when the ship got close enough to Polilio Island yesterday for the Coast Guard helicopter to reach it.

Xu, who appeared to be in his late 40s or early 50s, was brought to the Manila Doctors Hospital on United Nations Avenue where he was confined, said PCG aviation group acting chief of staff Commander Allan Corpuz. He said the Chinese national's upper body appeared to be bloated.

According to Corpuz, Xu fell ill while the M/V Xiang Yang Hung 09 was on its way back to China after a research mission to Southeast Asia.

Although the ship was headed for home, Xu's colleagues feared that with his worsening condition he might not get medical help in time.

The crew members informed Chinese authorities about the problem. China's maritime search and rescue center then sent out a request for rescue to the Philippines, which was the country nearest to the ship's location.

Corpuz said the request was issued on Friday, but at the time the research vessel was still too far away and beyond the reach of the PCG helicopter. Authorities of the two countries coordinated, and the Chinese vessel was instructed to head to Polilio Island.

Yesterday morning, the research vessel arrived 12 nautical miles off the island and the rescue was conducted.

Corpuz said the rescue came off without a hitch. The helicopter crew used a rescue hoist to pull the cook up into the helicopter, which could not land on the ship.

The M/V Xiang Yang Hung 09 resumed its voyage back to China after the rescue. Chinese authorities in the Philippines will look after Xu.

BI keeps eye on 'disrespectful' Briton

THE BUREAU of Immigration is keeping close tabs on a British national who has been accused of disrespecting the Philippine flag during a golf tournament at Clark, Pampanga.

Although Briton Ronald Judd has not been slapped with a deportation case, BI Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. said he had asked the immigration officer in Angeles, Pampanga, to submit to him the documents pertaining to the complaint filed against Judd and his Filipino wife, Amelia, in the city prosecutor's office there.

Fernandez said he wanted the bureau to be ready in case somebody brought a deportation case against Judd before the BI.

"There's no case filed against the Briton before the BI, but we will be evaluating the matter. That is why I asked for a report about the incident. But if others will file a case with us, we would have to act on that," Fernandez said in a phone interview.

The BI does not automatically file deportation cases against foreigners charged with violating Philippine laws, he said.

Fernandez said a charge like disrespecting the Philippine flag was considered a major offense and could be grounds for an alien being deemed undesirable. A declaration of undesirability could be used as a reason to deport a foreigner.

Members of the Mimosa Golf and Country Club Association Inc. filed complaints for violation of the Flag Law against the Judd couple last week after the two allegedly failed to stand up for the national anthem while the flag was being raised during a golf tourney on March 5.

According to the club members, the Judds remained seated and continued to eat despite being signaled to stand up. A verbal request to stand by a member who personally went up to the couple reportedly also went unheeded.

Leila B. Salaverria

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, May 30, 2005
9th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Tb 1:3; 2:1-8
Gospel: Mark 12:1-12

Using parables, Jesus went on to say, "A man planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a hole for the wine press and built a watch tower. Then he leased the vineyard to tenants and went abroad.

In due time he sent a servant to receive from the tenants his share of the fruit. But they seized the servant, struck him and sent him back empty-handed. Again the man sent another servant. They also struck him on the head and treated him shamefully. He sent another and they killed him. In the same way they treated many others; some they struck and others they killed. One was still left, his beloved son. And so, last of all, he sent him to the tenants, for he said: 'They will respect my son.'

But those tenants said to one another: 'This is the one who is to inherit the vineyard. Let's kill him and the property will be ours.' So they seized him and killed him, and threw him out of the vineyard. Now, what will the owner of the vineyard do? He will come and destroy those tenants and give the vineyard to others."

And Jesus added, "Have you not read this text of the Scriptures: The stone which the builders rejected has become the keystone. This was the Lord's doing; and we marvel at it.

They wanted to arrest him for they realized that Jesus meant this parable for them, but they were afraid of the crowd. So they left him and went away.

Commentary

Now Jesus tells stories about himself in Israel's history and about how we, his disciples are to live in our nations. A man planted a vineyard (always Israel) and protected it, prepared soil, built a wine press, watch tower—did everything so that the grapes would be rich for the harvest and making of good wine. But the tenants decided that they would keep the owner's share of the fruit and they refuse to justly give what is due. Then they mock, torture and kill anyone who comes near them who has been sent by the owner. Lastly they kill the owner's son, stupidly thinking they'll get the inheritance now that there is no son to receive it from his father's hand. Jesus quotes scripture and tells them he is the son of the vineyard owner—son of Yahweh who has tended the vineyard Israel all these centuries, though his word and covenant was broken, the prophets killed and they will do the same to him—unjustly, viciously. And they want to kill him, but are afraid of the people. Jesus truth—tells them and says what a marvelous thing God is doing in him and his presence on earth. Do we see it and rejoice in it? Do we do justice or resist the will of God for justice, for wine and hope for all peoples? Are we interested in just us?

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SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

CIVIL LAW (OBLIGATIONS AND CONTRACTS)/REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—Compromise agreements—Under Article 1306 of the Civil Code, contracting parties may establish such stipulations, clauses, terms and conditions as they may deem convenient, provided they are not contrary to law, morals, good customs, public order, or public policy. Thus, a compromise agreement whereby the parties make reciprocal concessions to resolve their differences to thereby put an end to litigation is binding on the contracting parties and is expressly acknowledged as a juridical agreement between them. To have the force of res judicata, however, the compromise agreement must be approved by final order of the court. To be valid, the compromise agreement must be based on real claims and actually agreed upon in good faith. Both conditions are present in the case at bar. In clear, categorical language, each of the parties have manifested their desire, by forging the Compromise Agreement, to abbreviate the legal battle and settle the case amicably to both their satisfaction. As the Agreement is not contrary to law, public order, public policy, morals or good customs, the same is hereby approved. The petition having become moot and academic, it should thus now be dismissed. (Citations omitted.) (Justice Carpio Morales, Special Third Division, Resolution, National Commercial Bank of Saudi Arabia v. Court Of Appeals, G.R. No. 124267, January 17, 2005) DIGEST BY RB VERA

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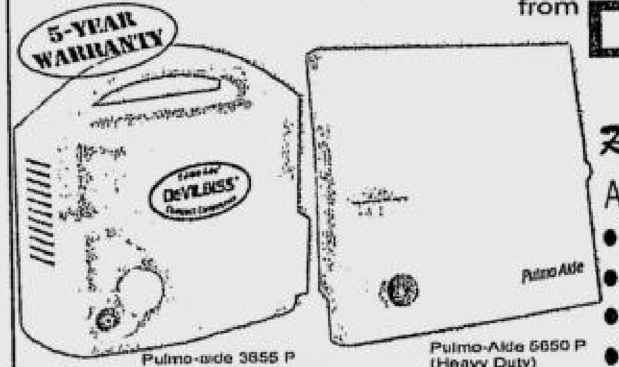

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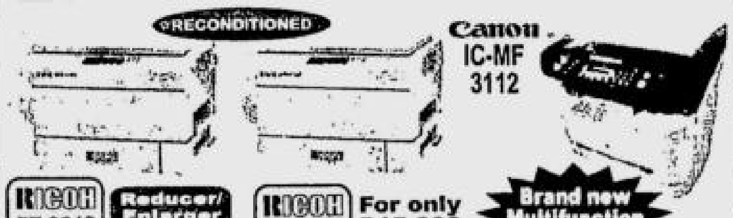

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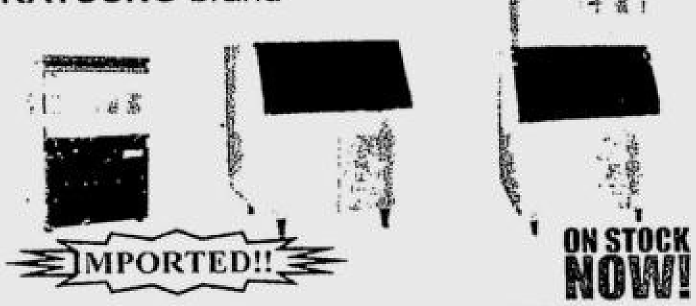

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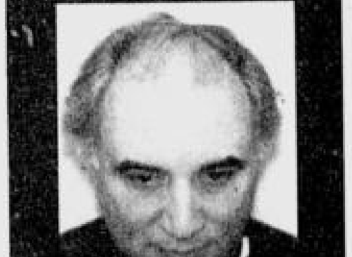

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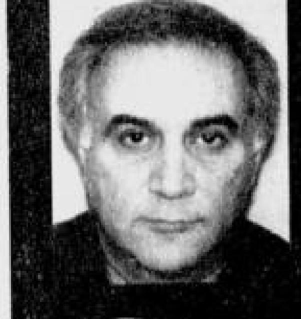

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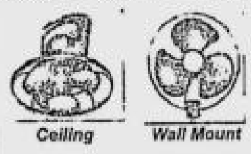

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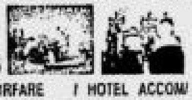

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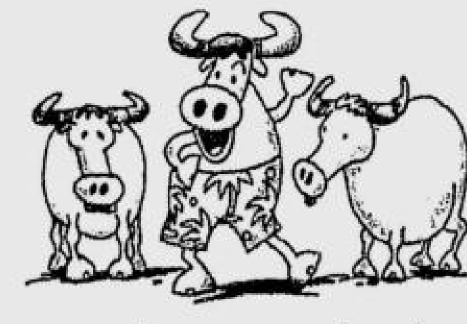

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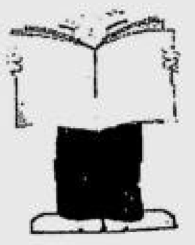

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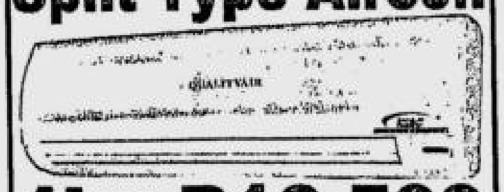

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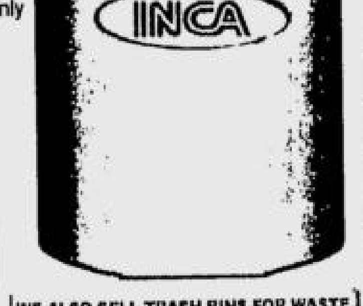

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Suspect in Bali eyed in market bombing

JAKARTA—The name of Azahari Husin, a shadowy Malaysian militant wanted for the Bali bombings, has been invoked by police following a new attack in Indonesia, underscoring frustrations in the hunt for one of Southeast Asia's most wanted men.

Detectives in Jakarta said a twin bomb attack on the island of Sulawesi that left up to 20 dead, bore the fingerprints of extremists trained by Husin, an Australian-educated, British-trained engineer.

However, with some observers expressing doubts over his involvement, the accusations perhaps reflect Husin's new emergence as an easy scapegoat for security forces struggling to contain home grown sectarian and political troubles.

Husin, 47, studied in Adelaide for four years in the late 1970s, then obtained an engineering degree in Malaysia and a doctorate at Reading University in England, security experts say.

He became a lecturer at Malaysia's University of Technology before dropping out of sight during a crackdown on Islamic militants here in 2001.

Married with two children, he is described by security officials as a fanatic who is ready to die for the cause of Jemaah Islamiyah, the al-Qaida-linked terror group blamed for a string of attacks in the region.

Azahari left his wife with the words that he had the greater cause of God to serve, security sources say.

He and another Malaysian, Noordin Mohammad Top, are suspected of making the bombs used in the October 2002 Bali bombings which killed 202 people and in the August 2003 attack on the Marriott hotel in Jakarta in which 12 died.

They resurfaced last year when police accused them of involvement in an attack outside the Australian Embassy in Jakarta in which 10 people and a suicide bomber were killed.

While some reports of Azahari say he trained in bomb-making in Afghanistan, he is believed to have honed his skills in Mindanao in the Muslim separatist southern Philippines in 1999.

Azahari was widely named as a possible successor to JI operations chief Hambali, an Indonesian who was arrested in Thailand last year and is in the custody of the United States.

But Malaysian security officials, uncomfortable with the role played by Malaysians in JI, insist that the JI leadership will always be Indonesian. *AFP*

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Japanese hostage killed

BAGHDAD—Insurgents said on Saturday they had killed a Japanese hostage seized in Iraq and posted footage on the Internet showing his bloodied corpse.

Japan's Foreign Ministry and the hostage's brother confirmed the video footage showed the body of Akihiko Saito, 44, a former paratrooper and veteran of the French Foreign Legion, who was captured on May 8 when insurgents ambushed a civilian security convoy.

Near the Syrian border, two suicide car bombers detonated their vehicles close to a base manned by US and Iraqi troops near the northern town of Sinjar, killing at least five Iraqis and wounding dozens, hospital officials said.

Guerrillas also ambushed a car carrying Iraqi soldiers near Hilla, south of Baghdad, killing four and seriously wounding another, local police said.

Insurgents have sharply raised the level of violence over the past month, including a wave of suicide bombings.

The attacks have killed nearly 700 Iraqis, and 68 US soldiers have died in violence in the same period—the worst monthly US death toll since January when more than 100 were killed in the run-up to the historic Jan. 30 elections. *Reuters*

SOFT HEART FOR AFRICA'S POOR
A Somali girl smiles as she attends a concert for aid for Africa in Rome May 28. Thousands of people took to the streets of Rome on Saturday to attend a demonstration to tackle poverty in Africa. REUTERS

ANXIETY IN EUROPE

France votes on EU charter

PARIS—France votes in a referendum on the European Union's new constitution on Sunday with opinion polls pointing to a rejection that supporters say could kill the charter and weaken France's role in Europe.

Final opinion polls put the "No" camp clearly ahead with up to 56 percent expecting to vote down the treaty at the end of a heated campaign that divided France and became a debate on the government's economic record as well as the future of Europe.

EU leaders will be watching anxiously when polling stations open at 8 a.m., pinning their hopes on the one-in-five voters who were left undecided when campaigning ended on Friday.

"Europe at stake," left-leaning newspaper Liberation declared on the front of its weekend edition above a picture of two dice whose faces spelled out "n-o-n" and "o-u-i."

There is also a great deal at stake for President Jacques Chirac, for whom a rejection of the treaty would be a big setback two years before presidential and parliamentary elections.

Chirac, 72, has said he will not quit but he would be likely to respond to a "No" vote by dismissing unpopular Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin. Interior Minister Dominique de Villepin, a trusted ally, leads the race to replace him.

France has almost 42 million registered voters.

Many commentators expect the outcome to be extremely close in voting that began in overseas French territories on Saturday.

The constitution was signed by EU leaders last October in Rome after long and tough negotiations. It sets rules for the EU that are intended to make decision-making easier after the bloc's enlargement from 15 to 25 member states in May 2004.

The charter requires the approval of all member states to go into force. If it were rejected, the EU would continue to operate under its current rules but they were designed for a smaller Union and voting could soon become paralyzed.

Nine countries have approved the charter and none has rejected it. Opinion polls show Dutch voters could oppose it in a referendum on June 1. *Reuters*

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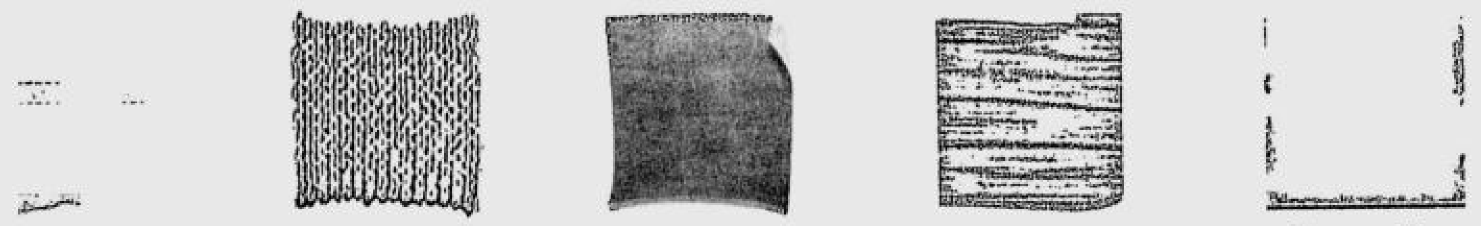

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Pope takes first trip abroad

BARI, Italy—Pope Benedict XVI visited the eastern seaport of Bari on his first papal trip Sunday and pledged to make healing the 1,000-year-old rift with the Orthodox church a "fundamental" commitment of his papacy.

Benedict made the pledge in a city closely tied to the Orthodox church. Bari, on Italy's Adriatic coast, is considered a "bridge" between East and West and is home to the relics of St. Nicholas of Myra, a 4th century saint who is one of the most popular in both the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches.

Bari is Pope Benedict's first pilgrimage outside Rome since he was elected the 265th leader of the Roman Catholic Church on April 19. *AP*

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US may change focus of antiterror policies–Post

WASHINGTON — President George W. Bush's administration is conducting a broad internal review of its antiterrorism policies, and may shift the focus from capturing al-Qaida leaders to a broader push to defeat "violent extremism," The Washington Post said Sunday.

The first major review of the "global war on terrorism" since it was conceived after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks could lead to a new national security policy blueprint, the daily said, replacing the document Bush signed in October 2001 pledging "the elimination of terrorism as a threat to our way of life."

"No question, this is the next stage, the phase two," a senior counterterrorism official told the daily. "We are coming to the point of decisions."

DEMONIZED—A supporter of Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez holds a poster that portrays US President George W. Bush as a devil during a march against terrorism in Caracas May 28.

REUTERS

The review is needed in part because after years of operations against it al-Qaida has shifted into a "far more amorphous, diffuse and difficult-to-target organization," the Post said.

"Naturally, the enemy has adapted," said Frances Fragos Townsend, Bush's top adviser on terrorism, who is heading up the review.

Some say the immediate threat from al-Qaida is greatly diminished, although the view is controversial, the daily said.

"What we really want now is a strategic approach to defeat violent extremism," a senior administration official told the Post on condition of anonymity.

The sources refused to give details of any new policies under consideration.

Some points of debate in the discussion include how central the war in Iraq is to the antiterrorism effort overall, and complaints from the State Department that US foreign policy has focused on terrorism to the exclusion of other priorities in recent years.

The review is also looking at "how to deal with the rise of a new generation of terrorists schooled in Iraq over the past couple years," the Post said.

AFP

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For the youth

EDITORIAL

ON April 26, the Committee on Justice of the House of Representatives approved the Consolidated Juvenile Justice Bill. The bill raises the age of criminal responsibility from nine to 12 years old. It explicitly prohibits the detention of children with adults. It calls for offenders of petty, or victimless, crimes to be redirected from the court to diversion programs. Most importantly, the bill aims to develop a comprehensive juvenile delinquency prevention program and to establish an Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention under the Department of Justice.

Unicef has applauded the committee approval of the bill. It has been a long time coming. Children's rights advocates have been lobbying for the passage of such a bill for over a decade. Even so, the bill has a long way to go before it becomes law.

In the meanwhile, Unicef points out some chilling facts. In the Philippines, from 1995 to 2000, a total of 52,576 children "were monitored as having been deprived of their liberty in detention displacement, under custodial setting through suspended sentence," according to the Second Country Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child submitted by the Council for the Welfare of Children. Unicef says that the report is an official admission that an average of 10,515 children are being arrested and detained every year, roughly 28 children every day, or more than one child every hour.

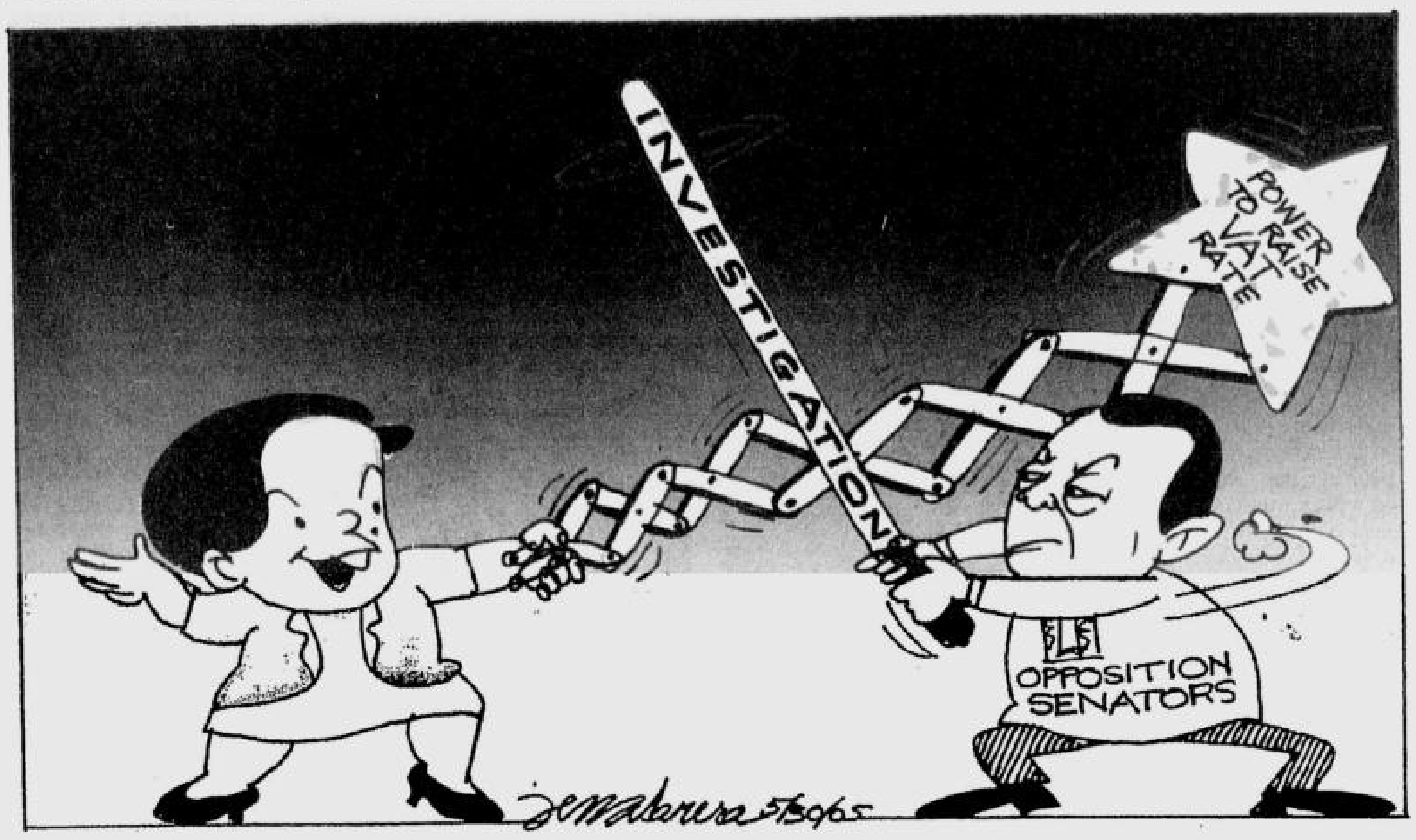
Furthermore, Unicef points to studies that show 80 percent of children in conflict with the law commit only one offense in their lifetime. Children's rights advocates insist there is a high likelihood that first-time offenders can be deterred from violating the law in the future.

At present, the law is inflexible, and when applied, throws children into the glacially slow judicial system. A child or young adult may be picked up for a petty crime, but thrown in jail with hardened offenders, who subject the children to ridicule or abuse, or introduce them to drug abuse, or recruit them into criminal syndicates and gangs. The psychological effect on children, thrown into our overcrowded and dangerous jails, subjected to red tape and left to the indifference, if not outright hostility, of prosecutors and judges; and even if the children do secure a judgement, they may have to wait for years in dismal conditions until they know their fate—all these things can warp a young mind.

The Juvenile Justice Bill aims to bring a more creative, and humane, attitude toward juvenile offenders by resorting to the principles of Restorative Justice. This is an approach to crime that doesn't rely on simply subjecting the accused to the full harshness—and impersonal workings—of the law, but instead emphasizes the ways in which crime hurts relationships in the community. The system of Restorative Justice requires the maximum involvement not only of the offender and the community but also of the victims. This is done through a three-stage process: first, the accountability of an offender is emphasized; second, the impact of the crime on the victim and the community are assessed; and finally, ways in which the offender can repair the harm caused to the community are determined.

This framework is ideal for young offenders, who may break the law out of desperation or from not being fully aware of the harmful effects of their actions. It involves the community in figuring out why the young do wrong, and in making amends for the harm caused by the wrong deed. Young offenders get to understand the wrong they did, and best of all, are then made to make amends, in a positive and immediate manner, for what they did, thus ensuring justice for all concerned.

This is a bill that deserves to become a law, and at the earliest possible time. The system, as it stands, doesn't work, and worst of all, it contributes to long-term criminal behavior. The bill deserves attention from the counterpart committee in the Senate, as well as full and speedy passage in both chambers of Congress. Humaneness has, for so many reasons and for so long, been a characteristic absent from the justice system of our country. Even if it may take much longer to apply similar principles to adults who commit petty crimes, there isn't any reason to delay embarking on the objectives of this bill now, for the youth.



Red tape longest at NWRB

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

CUT red tape, President Macapagal-Arroyo told (again) the bureaucracy last week. One broadsheet even made it its main story. That was the nth time the President gave that order. It was one of her promises early in her term. For red tape in the Philippine bureaucracy is indeed the longest in the world.

The President should particularly crack the whip at the National Water Resources Board (NWRB). An application for a permit to harness the waters of the Wawa Dam has been pending in the NWRB for 12 years now. Twelve years! How much longer can red tape be?

And we need additional sources of water desperately. Metro Manila runs short of water every summer even if, during the rainy season, it drowns in floodwaters and the reservoirs overflow. The water level at Angat Dam, the primary source of water for the metropolis, is now below normal.

Every time something happens to the tunnels through which water flows to Angat and then to La Mesa Dam, Metro Manila runs short of water. When logs blocked the Umiray tunnel as a result of the floods that buried several villages in Quezon and Aurora, the flow of water stopped for months and water in the reservoir dropped to a critical level. When another tunnel was damaged recently, large areas in the Maynilad franchise territory went dry. One other tunnel is in poor condition and could collapse anytime. When it does, large areas in the metropolis will again go thirsty. For Metro Manila has no ready alternative source of water in times of emergency.

Yet there is a source of water ready and waiting, within a stone's throw of Manila. This is the Wawa Dam in Montalban town which has been renamed Rodriguez. Wawa Dam used to be the only source of water for Manila, that is until Angat Dam was harnessed and Wawa was abandoned by the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS). We need to harness it again, because Angat is no longer sufficient for our needs.

Even now, the farmers of Bulacan are suffering because they were unable to plant and therefore they have nothing to eat. Irrigation water was cut off from them because water for Metro Manila's households was running short.

With Wawa Dam's waters, Metro Manila will not run short of water even during the driest months, even with El Niño; and the Bulacan farmers will always have irrigation water; and Napocor's power plants can generate more power at Angat and earn more money for its bankrupt coffers.

It is a simple matter of laying new pipes from Wawa to La Mesa Dam which should take less than a year. The project would not cost the government a single peso either. A private contractor, the San Lorenzo Ruiz Builders and Developers Group, a partner in the construction of the Casecnan Dam, has offered to do it at no cost to the government. All it needs is a permit from the NWRB to harness the waters in the Wawa River.

The application for the permit has been filed a long time ago. All legal requirements has been complied and has been consistently followed up, but it is still "under study" at the NWRB—for the last 12 years.

Why is the NWRB doing this? I think somebody else close to the NWRB is interested in getting the water rights to Wawa. But the NWRB cannot give the water rights to anybody else without being sued because under the law, the first applicant should get the permit, and the San Lorenzo Ruiz group is the first, and there is no other applicant so far. The MWSS, the former permit holder, has long ago renounced its rights. I think that the MWSS, after renouncing Wawa and declaring it doesn't need its waters anymore, had a change of mind.

By all rights, logic and necessity, the NWRB should already give the permit to San Lorenzo. But I think NWRB is "dribbling the ball," lengthening the red tape so that the exasperated applicant will throw up his hands and quit.

But after 12 years of work, spending millions of pesos for all the requirements asked by the NWRB, how can San Lorenzo now abandon its application?

Meanwhile, every day, millions of gallons of fresh water just go over the dam, flow down the Marikina and Pasig rivers, eventually ending up wasted in Manila Bay. In terms of unrealized revenues, the government has already lost tens of billions of pesos that it now desperately needs.

Now that the rainy season is here, this unharnessed water flowing over the dam will cause mass floodings, death and property destruction in Montalban, San Mateo, Marikina, and Metro Manila during heavy rainfall and typhoons.

Through the 12 years, the NWRB used every delaying tactic to deny San Lorenzo its water rights over Wawa. Its latest gimmick was to order San Lorenzo to do a hydrology study to determine the water flows, utilizing their own consultants and in accordance with the Terms of Reference prepared by the NWRB itself. The NWRB said that if the results of the study would show a higher water flow, it would be willing to guarantee the amendment of San Lorenzo's water permit and increase the proposed water extraction.

"We agreed to conduct a (still another) study as we were confident that the water flow of Wawa River was more than the 1.74 CMS (cubic meter per second) that the NWRB believes," wrote Oscar Violago, president of San Lorenzo, in his letter to President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Now, after the results of the study have come out showing a mean average of 16.64 CMS, the NWRB has unjustly refused to abide by its commitment, claiming that the hydrology study was not properly carried out. This, despite the fact that the consultant who conducted the study was recommended and accredited by the NWRB itself in accordance with the Terms of Reference it itself prepared," complained Violago.

Oscar's lament

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THE GOOD news is that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has sworn before a council of Protestant bishops that she hasn't gotten a centavo from *jueteng*. "I can assure you," she said fervently with eyes closed while the bishops raised their hands over her in blessing, "that I am one president that did not receive any payola." Bienvenido Abante Jr., a bishop of the Metropolitan Bible Baptist Church was sufficiently impressed. "We believe that. I don't think that the President would lie before all the bishops."

The bad news is that Ms Arroyo also swore on Rizal Day 2002 that she would not run for president in 2004 because, she said categorically, to do so would mean assuring "unending divisiveness" in her country. At the time, I too said to myself: "I believe that. I don't think the President would lie before the grave of Jose Rizal." Well, she did run, and assured unending divisiveness in her country.

The bad news is that Ms Arroyo also swore before the body of Pope John Paul II that the Pope, when he was alive, praised her for bringing back morality to this country. Well, while the Pope was alive, he bitterly condemned the Iraq invasion as immoral. As president, Ms Arroyo has been its leading spokesperson. While the Pope was alive, he bitterly condemned the global order imposed by the WTO as immoral. As president, Ms Arroyo has been its leading exponent. While the Pope was alive, he bitterly condemned the culture of death as reprehensible. As president, Ms Arroyo has posed before bodies riddled with bullets and slumped on the wheels of cars to advertise fighting crime.

The bad news is that Ms Arroyo has also repeatedly sworn before the people that she would undo the corruption of the Erap government. Yet today, the very thing that brought down Erap's government, which is *jueteng*, continues to rage like a forest fire in summer, first and last in the President's home province of Pampanga.

In the last two cases at least, I no longer said to myself: "I believe that. I don't think the President would lie before the Pope—a prospective saint—and the people. Is it possible the President holds the Protestant bishops in greater awe than Rizal, the Pope and the people? You tell me.

But as I said in a previous column, I don't know that the *jueteng* exposé will end up leading all the way to GMA. At most it will probably suggest strong links with Mike and Mikey Arroyo. Even the *jueteng* exposé against Erap did not prove his patronage of it conclusively, and that exposé was made by no less than a presidential pal, Chavit Singson. The only damning evidence we had was Erap trying to impress Clarissa Ocampo by signing a check in front of her with the name "Jose Velarde." Someone routinely signs checks in the name of "Jose Pidal" and nothing has happened to him.

Bishop Oscar Cruz himself has said he has no proof against GMA. Which GMA's people have naturally spun, Ignacio Bunye immediately going out of his way to thank Cruz for the vote of confidence and branding those pushing for a congressional inquiry into *jueteng* as destabilizers. Which prompted Cruz in turn to issue a clarification that he was merely affirming the principle that people were innocent until proven guilty. His group, the Krusadang Bayan Laban sa Jueteng, he said, "had no choice but to subscribe to this judicial principle." But that didn't mean GMA was off the hook, he said. In fact, he was giving the President only one year to three years to stop *jueteng*. If she doesn't, he said, he would personally go to the President and tell her: "Get out! What kind of President are you? You can't even stop jueteng."

My question for Cruz is: Why wait for one year to three years?

The judicial principle that people are innocent until proven guilty merely means that GMA may not go to jail at this time. It does not mean GMA may continue to govern at this time. Those are two different things. The basis of freedom is being innocent of a crime until proven guilty. The basis of governance is being weighed and found worthy. The fact that *jueteng* (which was the one thing the country overthrew Erap for) riots in this country four years after GMA came into power, signifying as it did the height of rottenness, means that she has been weighed and found wanting. She has lost her right to govern.

Indeed, the fact that *jueteng* has become the number one livelihood project right in her home province must suggest only two things. One is that she is the "patron saint" of *jueteng* in this country, notwithstanding that her name does not appear in the payoffs. Money has been known to slither upward by secret and tortuous routes. But like the wholesale murder of journalists, wholesale *jueteng* cannot happen without the collusion, or active encouragement, of the authorities. If *jueteng* flourishes this robustly in this country, it can only be with official blessing.

The alternative is worse, which is that GMA can't see what's happening under her nose. Probably right under, as in her own household. Between being an outright crook and an absolute fool, the latter can't be better. Certainly not for this country, which propped GMA up with the categorical, if implicit, order to clean up the pigsty her predecessor had made of the country. Turning the country into an even bigger pigsty unwittingly qualifies her for suffering the same fate as her relentlessly unwitting predecessor.

GMA not only has not stopped *jueteng* in the four years she's been in power, she has spread it like a cancerous growth across the country. Why wait for three more years? Why not say right now: "Get out! What kind of President are you? You can't even stop jueteng." ■

Crack down on airport syndicates

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

MANILA International Airport Authority chief Alfonso Cusi, a respected bureaucrat handpicked by President Macapagal-Arroyo to head Manila International Airport Authority, must crack down on the airport syndicate preying on foreigners. Japanese journalist Akira Maki was en route to Mindanao to cover the story of the two Japanese stragglers when his bag containing $20,000 disappeared while passing through the X-ray machine at the Manila domestic airport. Aware of shenanigans here, Maki claimed he never let that bag out of his sight even while he was being frisked—until someone dropped some coins on the floor which momentarily distracted him. The next thing he knew, his bag was gone! Recall that INQUIRER columnist Randy David had a story on a similar con job at the NAIA some years back.

* * *

Cusi has to get to the bottom of this international shame (of all the bad luck, it had to happen to a visiting journalist!). Fortunately, everything was recorded by a surveillance video tape. If Cusi has to fire the entire group manning that X-ray machine, he should do so and file the necessary charges against its members, just to teach them and other syndicates a lesson.

(Yesterday, Batanes Gov. Vicente Gato turned over to Maki the missing bag containing $17,978 [not $20,000 as initially reported]. The mixup was traced to a member of a police group that helped Gato collect his luggage from the X-ray machine feeder.—Ed.)

* * *

From all that's being said about *jueteng*, there seems to be a growing advocacy to legalize it. Some of that must be the honest opinion of some lawmakers and opinion-makers; but some could also be motivated by grease money from the *jueteng* lords and their cohorts. Remember that this is a multi-billion-peso cottage industry. But it's precisely the multi-billions involved in *jueteng* that bother me. If, as claimed, the largesse is so huge and spread out all across the nation, this only shows how much blood money is being sucked from the lower income groups, *jueteng's* main patrons. For unlike the casinos and even lotto, which are patronized by those who earn relatively well, those who bet in *jueteng* are largely the urban and rural poor. With each bet, they part with money that should go into their families' food, clothing, medicines and other needs, just to buy a little dream, i.e., winning a few hundred pesos. But we all know there's a lot of manipulation in *jueteng*, so that the poor don't get much—the ones "super-enriched" are the *jueteng* lords and their cohorts in the government, police and military.

* * *

Pro-legalization advocates argue that rescuing it from the underground would at least bring in revenue for the government. Would it really? How would one monitor *jueteng* revenues for rightful taxes, when the BIR cannot even adequately monitor the income-tax payments of professionals? Can *jueteng* be straightened out and played fairly to benefit the poor? Don't be ridiculous.

Pro-legalization proponents argue that since it cannot be eradicated, it should be legalized; but as INQUIRER columnist Isagani Cruz argued, we might as well legalize the Abu Sayyaf, rape, plunder, smuggling and other problems we can't seem to solve. Throw in prostitution, too.

This defeatism is sad. In the past, there were cases where *jueteng* was completely stopped in some localities; this happened when the police, the military and the LGUs joined hands and said no. The name of the late Col. Tirso H. Gador is always mentioned (PMA '66)—he completely stopped *jueteng* in Cagayan when he was provincial commander there in the early '80s. But it will take political will, good governance and economic betterment. The question is, can this administration muster these elements? It's correct, though, in asserting that there must be a reasonable timetable to eradicate the vice, as even President Ramos, who was PC chief for over a decade, was unable to do it.

* * *

To strengthen the advocacy for legalization, some people point out that even Singapore is loosening up and plans to now allow casinos there. What is not being pointed out is that the overwhelming majority of Singaporeans are against the plan, including, I understand, several members of Prime Minister Lee's Cabinet—they all realize the high social costs gambling would entail. A cabbie grumbled to us during our brief stopover in Singapore last week that PM Lee is enticing Singaporeans with the casino plan on the pretext that it would draw more tourists. But he argued that tourists who like gambling already go to nearby Genting Highlands in Malaysia or to Macao, so why put up casinos in Singapore? What Lee is not admitting, the cabbie said, is that he wants more revenues, "but money is not everything." He lamented that the government wouldn't listen to the people's or the Cabinet's sentiment, and is just ramming the casino plan down their throat. And to think the Singaporeans have the highest per capita income in the region.

* * *

Congratulations to my friend, lawyer Amado D. Valdez, who has gone back to his first love—the academe. He is returning to the UE College of Law as dean, a post he held when he was part of the private prosecutors' team during the Senate impeachment trial of former president Estrada in January 2001. Academe's gain is government's loss. As government corporate counsel in the first Arroyo term, Valdez made some decisions that impacted on the business and corporate world, his philosophy being to release the billions of pesos tied up in litigation into the economic mainstream. When he resolved the legal standoff between MWSS and Manila Water, the latter's foreign partners poured their investments. It was also his legal opinion that accelerated the construction and development of Batangas Port, something MIAA chief Al Cusi should know well as he was then the general manager of the Philippine Ports Authority.

Endangered families

COMMENTARY

Denis Murphy

SOME 80,000 families, a population the size of Marikina City, will be relocated from the North and South Rail projects. So far 7,000 have been removed, and there is already more than enough evidence to suggest that the work should be delayed and the plan reviewed and refinanced. It just isn't working fairly for the poor. If changes aren't made, we may find that, along with a railroad stretching from La Union to Bicol, there is also be a belt of resentful poor people stretching just as far.

A 60-meter-wide trail of destruction, similar to that left by a tornado or "twister", now runs from Samson Road, Caloocan north to the Bulacan border, a distance of about 7 kilometers. This was part of the old north rail line; the 7,000 urban poor families, living along that stretch until recently, have been evicted by the government.

There are things to admire in this government eviction work. It was done with few press releases for one thing, and done quickly after many years of endless talks. The new North Rail is a project of national importance, the government says, and as such it is good to get a fast start. Finally, the eviction was done non-violently, as far as the people we spoke with knew.

However, there are many other aspects of the eviction that are not so admirable. According to testimony from some of the evicted families, about half of all the families living along the tracks received nothing at all in terms of money or relocation. When we asked why so many were excluded, we got several answers that need to be examined further. Some said the families who received nothing were not censused because they were away at their work when the census was made, or they were renters, or they were not residing on the tracks before 1992 and the signing of the Urban Development and Housing Act (UDHA). None of these reasons justifies being put into the street without compensation or relocation.

Half of the remaining families received P50,000 each, which, on the face of it, is not bad. However, the check is given after the family's house is demolished. Families are therefore left with the remains of their houses and the checks, very vulnerable to every scam existing.

We met 10 women, each of whom gave P40,000 of their P50,000 payments to a local foundation which promised to find land for the people. The women put their money into the foundation's account. For all legal purposes the money is now the foundation's. The women have lost all control of their money. Giving poor people big sums of money in a time of crisis invites disaster.

The second half of the remaining families were relocated to Towerville in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan or in Bignay, Valenzuela. Neither relocation sites promises much. Towerville is 35 kilometers from the people's work, plagued with all the problems of the older distant relocation sites. Bignay is zoned as commercial land, and the mayor is reportedly not happy with the relocatees.

There was no violence, to the government's credit. But there are indications that the government avoided protests and resistance by buying off the leaders with large sums of money. The leaders in return advised their members to move away peacefully, which they did. If true, is undermining poor people's organizations with big money the way to build a more just society?

In addition, there are hints from people in government, and close to it, that certain ranking officials will benefit in unimagined ways from the project. People pointed out sites along the rails and said certain politicians had been there to examine them as possible sites for shopping centers in the new stations.

The North Rail is funded up to $500 million by the Chinese government. Couldn't more money be spent on the poor and more care shown them? Decent relocation might require no more than 5 percent to 10 percent of that total.

Worse may be coming. The evictions will continue into Bulacan, where the Bulacan Diocese is helping prepare 13,952 families, along the tracks from Meycauan to Malolos, for the coming evictions.

Church workers told the writer they expect 40 percent of the families (whose names are on the master list of families censused) to be disqualified as beneficiaries. In Barangay Bangkal, the first area of Meycauan reached by the relocation teams, 105 out of 156 families, meeting in the barangay hall, refused to move to the proposed relocation site because it is prone to floods. When we asked those who did agree to the relocation why they signed up, they said, "What other choice do we have?" The site is not ready: the 10 families there live in tents. Why can't the relocation sites be finished first before people are asked to move?

Why can't we treat the poor a little more decently? There are huge sums of money involved in this project. Some people will make fortunes in real estate. The whole society will benefit from a better rail service. Why can't the poor also come out winners?

* * *

Denis Murphy works with the Urban Poor Associates.

Senior moment

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

OF the Class of 1944 of Georgetown Prep (Washington D.C.), my father's high school class, only a few are left. Among the most prominent of them is John Dingell. A member of the US Congress since 1955, he is the longest-serving member of the US House of Representatives. I first met him in the company of my father in 1985, when he had us over for lunch and we toured the US Congress. I recall that I thought I was being frightfully witty when I asked for Russian dressing on my salad in the House dining room (this was at the height of the Cold War); the most enjoyable part was riding the little electric subway that American legislators use to go from their offices to Congress.

While in Washington, I decided to pay Representative Dingell a visit to see how he was and to find out his views on political developments in America. He is, of course, much older now and rather frail-looking. He turns 80 in July. He is proud of being a co-sponsor of the Civil Rights Act, and of the 1990 Clean Air Act, and for fighting for the passage of the Endangered Species Act. In the past, Dingell led successful efforts to stop the Bush Administration from allowing higher arsenic levels in drinking water and from cutting funds to investigate and prosecute environmental crimes. He has been responsible for laws such as Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and the Mammography Quality Standards Act. A leader in the effort to toughen corporate accountability, both before and after the Enron and WorldCom accounting scandals, Dingell has also taken the lead in exposing American government waste and abuses of tax dollars, including the investigation of no-bid defense contracts in Iraq.

He holds office in a lower floor of the Rayburn House Office Building, a squat, Roman-style office complex. What struck me was how small his staff is: about four people in Washington D.C. and another contingent attending to constituents in Michigan. Photos of the lawmaker with Speaker Sam Rayburn, Presidents Truman, Kennedy, Johnson, Reagan and Bush (W, that is), adorn the walls, along with a photo of Dingell with the Cookie Monster. In 1985, I saw an autographed photo of Franklin D. Roosevelt but it seems to have been put away for safekeeping.

We sat down in his private office. I mentioned to him that the last time my father saw him on television, Dingell was swearing in Newt Gingrich as speaker of the House. He smiled: "Not the most pleasant of tasks." He is deeply unhappy with the political atmosphere in Washington since Gingrich's time. "They have no respect for tradition. No regard at all for debate, civilized or otherwise. They think they have it all figured out and will stop at nothing to get what they want." Does this mean they act as if they think they'll be in power for ever? "That's exactly right," Dingell nodded. "They have no conception that today's majority can be tomorrow's minority: the basis of the self-restraint that should be one of democracy's defining characteristics."

Asked about the then-burning issue of the day (since defused, after a herculean bipartisan effort), the threat to resort to the "nuclear option," which would have ended the time-honored tactic of filibustering to prevent judicial nominations offensive to the minority, Dingell frowns. "The new Republicans are different from the old ones. They're simply uninterested in getting along with anyone who disagrees with them. They fit the facts to their existing views—look at Iraq." Soberly he added, though, that "I do think they will work it out, there are sober men and women in the Senate." Indeed, his opinion of the Senate has been raised a notch or two over the years. "It's taken me a long time to change my views about the Senate. Now, though, I realize the importance of another chamber that can apply the brakes and say, 'whoa, hold on now, let's look at this further,'" he explained. Not that he thinks the Senate is very much worse than the House. His younger colleagues in the House are all ideology with little or no regard for the discipline of legislative life. "They don't study. Recently they passed a law referring to another law—except the law they referred to hasn't even been passed," he sadly observed.

What accounts for the success of the new Republicans? With a bemused smile, he quipped, "You see, they lie better than us. A lot better." The Republicans are better organized, and their take-no-prisoners attitude towards politics has left Democrats somewhat shellshocked.

His big fight these days is to save Social Security: "My father was one of the sponsors of social security. If you look at the photo of President Roosevelt signing Social Security into law, you can see a skinny Polack with a moustache and a broken nose, that was my father." He finds the Bush administration's proposals offensive, but maintains that he and his fellow Democrats, as well as moderate Republican allies, will save the day. "We'll win, but it will be a very close fight," he said.

His parting words were a pledge. As a World War II veteran, he feels strongly about the issue of veteran's benefits denied to Filipinos: "They were gallant allies and helped win the war. They fought for their country's freedom in partnership with the United States. They deserve every bit as much as American veterans receive." He is pessimistic, though, about the prospects of our veterans. "This administration has been cutting the budget for veterans," he says. He shakes his head; extends his hand, and wearily gets up to attend an important vote on the floor.

* * *

Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

A vanishing 'Last Frontier'?

COMMENTARY

Patrick A. Regoniel, Ph. D.

I REMEMBER way back in 1988 when I first came to Puerto Princesa City as a migrant from Antique. While waiting for our service vehicle to bring us to the office of the Philippine-Japan Crocodile Conservation Project (then a special project of the Department of the Environment and Natural Resources), which was 13 kilometers away from the city, I thought of counting the number of vehicles passing by Rizal Avenue, the main thoroughfare of the city. I counted about four to six vehicles, mostly tricycles, every minute. Too few, I thought; it will take quite a considerable time for the city to progress economically.

Time passed by as if in a snap. Now, after 17 years, married a Puerto Princesan, with whom I have an 8-year-old child, and back from graduate study at the School of Environmental Science and Management at the University of the Philippines-Los Baños, I am busy doing some research work in the coastal areas, assessing coral reef areas and engaging in coastal policy work. Earlier, I embarked on a survey of fisherfolk participation and compliance with coastal and marine policies.

My findings, based on interviews and cursory observation, reveal that the coastal and marine environment has degenerated a lot. Lots of damaged coral reefs, opportunistic algal growth, and the absence or scarcity of butterfly fishes (indicators of healthy coral reefs), are evident. It appears that even with sincere and honest efforts to conserve these resources, the different agencies of government cannot thoroughly keep in check the continued degradation of the natural resources, at least in the bays that I have visited, including the bays of Puerto Princesa, Ulugan and Green Island in the northern part of Palawan. Logistics and coordination are always a problem. The people in general are apathetic, set aside political motives and interests.

The effect of illegal fishing on the reefs is subtle and deadly. You cannot see the tell-tale signs of destruction in the terrestrial zones. You can see the trees fall or get burned or the mountains become bare. But in the coastal zones, there are only a privileged few who can witness how the coral reefs and fishes fare. To go scuba diving needs certification, and indeed scuba diving requires a significant amount of money. It is sad to say that there are a few healthy reefs standing. I suspect the use of cyanide, to collect live commercial fish that fetch high market value, is the major culprit aggravating the condition of the reefs already damaged by El Niño and typhoons. Using explosives might be relatively better off since users could be apprehended on the strength of cursory evidence, that is, mere possession or practice.

The fishers (or rather 'the killers' if I may call them that way) have developed varied ways of circumventing the local law which is designed to curb illegal fishing and other "environment-unfriendly" practices. Some pretend to fish using hook-and-line, a method sanctioned by the city government; but in reality, they insert a pellet or two of cyanide in their bait's stomach, leave the area for a while and return to scoop up intoxicated fish. Others pretend to fix fish pens; but in reality they release some toxic chemicals and render fishes groggy. There are those who pretend to use the spear gun in catching fish. Indeed, they use the spear gun, but after that they squirt the massive corals with cyanide because commercially valuable fishes are not that easy to catch in the crevices. That is why, my workmates say they see fishes in the market with direct hits always through their vital organs. They wonder how accurate the fishermen are in hitting their targets, always hitting the same deadly spot. They seem to be mermen who could patiently wait for the fishes to come out of their hiding places and then shoot with fatal accuracy.

Considering Palawan is the country's "Last Frontier" due to its relatively "healthy" and "abundant" coastal and marine resources, there is a need for policy makers to reexamine their goals and get their act together. There is a need for politicians to be thoroughly mindful of the environment, not just of votes. There is a need for traders to be responsible. There is a need for fishers to be sensible. As always, experience reveals, this idealist thought does not happen. It appears that we can do nothing about keeping our coastal and marine resources as viable as they should be. The mix of circumstances governing the state of the coastal and marine resources (the dictates of the market, local government interests, grassroot level sentiments, rapid population increase and corresponding increase in consumption, general apathy, poor economic standing, plain attitudinal problem, among others) brings these resources towards the brink of extinction. It appears there is no way out but to hope and pray that things will get better. I have a pessimist outlook regarding what I see. As long as resources are there to exploit, illegal activities will keep on. Filipinos are good at circumventing the law. It is only when these resources are quite scarce that the people come to realize that indeed there is a need to seriously consider a resource, not just for this generation but also for the future. As my dissertation adviser Perry would say in class, citing that famous Confucian statement, "Give a man a fish and he will live for a day, teach him to fish and he will live for a lifetime." Now, the question is "How will the man fish when there's no more fish to fish?"

Puerto Princesa has progressed a lot. These days, I can see a lot of vehicles plying Rizal Avenue, bumper to bumper. I can see smoke belching from vehicles despite efforts by the Land Transportation Office to reduce emissions as mandated by the Clean Air Act. The road is congested and the people appear to view everything as a normal part of living. I disagree. My child got chubby during the vacation, but now, after she had gone a week to school which is six kilometers from our "cleaner environment" in suburban Tiniguiban, I hear her wheezing and complaining, "Papa, *may* asthma *na naman ako*."

THEY SAID

Second-class love

"It's unfair to be a second-class citizen because of love."

—Spain's Socialist legislator Carmen Monton on the parliament's initial approval of gay marriage

Additional bite

"We have to bite the bullet to gain a better economic footing through ... the Napocor rate hike."

—Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye on the per kilowatt-hour additional charge by the National Power Corporation

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Strengthen, don't abolish, MMDA

THE METROPOLITAN Manila Development Authority should not be abolished just because Republic Act 7924, the law that created it, is imperfect.

The MMDA is now handicapped after the Supreme Court ruled twice that it had not been delegated by Congress the power to legislate (MMDA vs Bel-Air Village Association) and to confiscate and suspend or revoke drivers' licenses in the enforcement of traffic laws and regulations (MMDA vs. Dante Garin).

Rather than push for the immediate abolition of the MMDA, Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr. should look into the imperfections of RA 7924, and help strengthen the MMDA by arming it with the powers and functions needed by a metropolitan authority.

As an environmental planner and advocate of metropolitanization, I believe that we still need the MMDA to perform the following tasks:

1 . Oversee coordination in planning, implementation and management of projects, and delivery of metro-wide services.

2. Coordinate legislation and law enforcement.

3. Serve as forum for settling disputes that go beyond city or municipal boundaries.

4. Promote equity and financial equalization.

5. Provide opportunities for the redistribution of costs and benefits of local services.

6. Integrate efforts, and avoid duplication of facilities and services and the risk of losing democratic control and accountability on metropolitan problems.

Congress should correct the flaws of RA 7924 by considering some of the laudable proposals on strengthening the MMDA. That way, the public will not be confused over MMDA's mandated functions.

—RAUL D. VERCELES

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

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Abra's war freaks also involved in drug trafficking and other crimes?

THIS is in reaction to the news reports on the private armies in Abra, my home province.

Abra is a peaceful place. Its culture is a mixture of Spanish and Tingguian (the local tribal group). By tradition, the local folks engage in weaving, jewelry-making and dyeing of natural products. The province contains many caves and natural springs. The most important historical site is the Gabriela Silang Monument in Pidigan, honoring the "Joan of Arc" of the Ilocanos, who together with her husband Diego, led the 18th century resistance against the Spaniards.

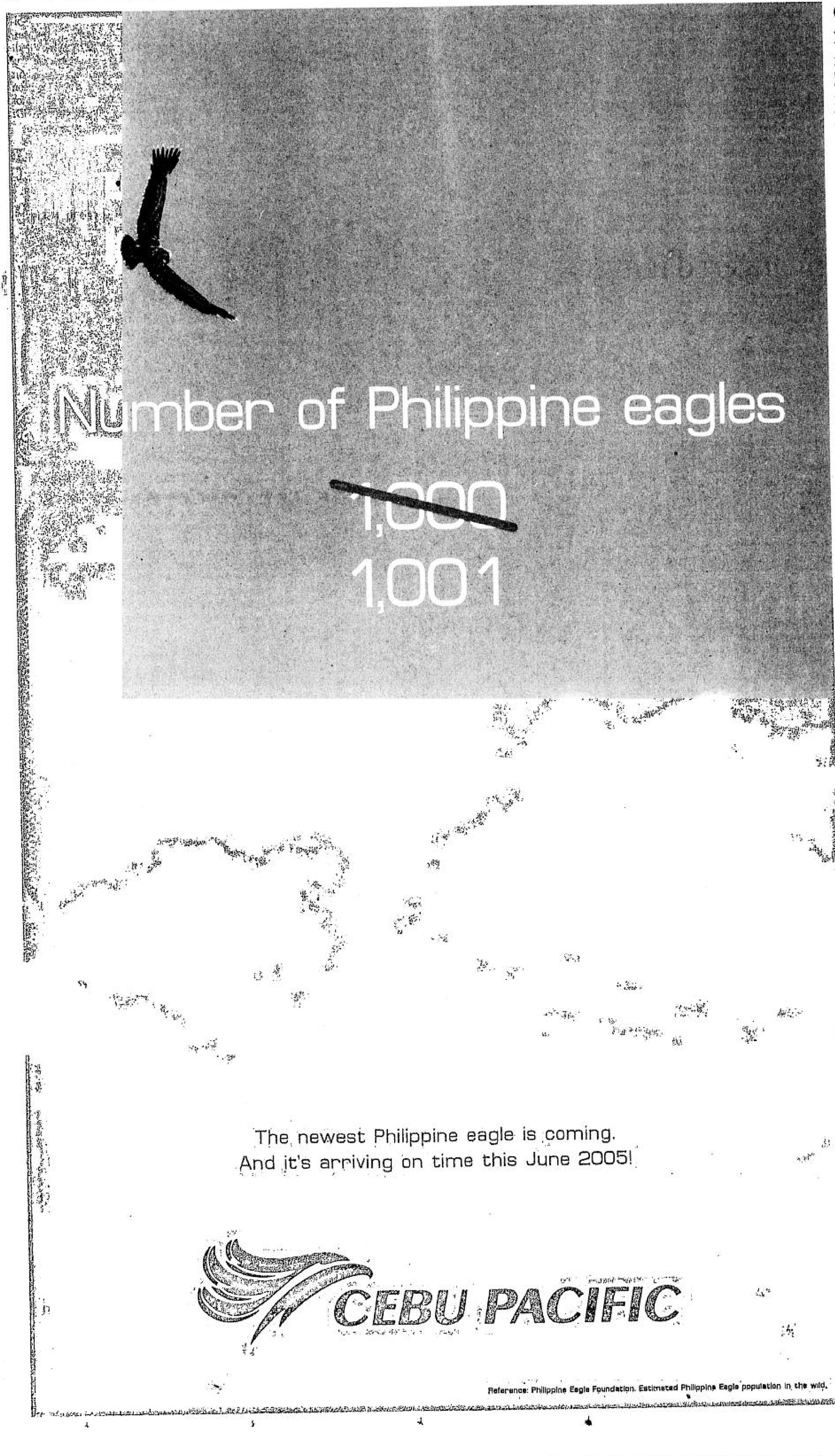
However, it is sad to say that today, the peace-loving Abraeños have turned out to be war freaks as portrayed by Mayor Cecile Luna of Lagayan town. She has admitted in public that she has her own private armies to protect herself. By doing this, she is committing a crime against her constituents whom she vowed to serve and protect.

The series of killings in the province perpetrated by her private armies and that of the governor are obstructing development in the province. In my personal observation, the issues raised by Mayor Luna against some uniformed men in the province are aimed to cover up the involvement of local government officials in illegal logging, drug trafficking, gambling and other crimes prevalent in the area.

Through your publication, I am appealing to all the people in my province to join hands and pray to God that our local government officials in Abra be given enough courage to face the truth so that our province will be set free from its worrisome peace and order condition, which is growing worse because of the selfishness and evil intentions of a few local leaders.

God bless Abra!

—EDITHA C. CABACUNGAN,
J.P. Rizal,
Makati City



Number of Philippine eagles
~~1,000~~
1,001
The newest Philippine eagle is coming.
And it's arriving on time this June 2005!
CEBU PACIFIC
Reference: Philippine Eagle Foundation. Estimated Philippine Eagle population in the wild.

Columnist who cares for small people

I WOULD like to thank Ceres P. Doyo for batting for the Aetas. However, considering the "all-show-no-substance record of President Macapagal-Arroyo," I am afraid that the Aetas will end up with nothing as usually happens with the downtrodden and with those who have no political power and connections.

It is just depressing to see that graft and corruption, corrupt military, tax evasion by famous, powerful and influential figures), undeserved high salaries and perks of executives of government-owned and -controlled (not to mention bad loans, such as that incurred on the Bataan Nuclear Power Plant) persist.

I am glad that there are still columnists like Ms Doyo who write relevant articles. Others simply "advertise" their travels in their columns as if their wanderings have relevance to Philippine society as a whole. Or, maybe, they just run out of ideas to write about that they have problems meeting their contracted column quotas. So what better way than to describe their foreign travels as if the readers care at all.

Again, I thank Ms Doyo for caring for the small people.

—OSCAR R. AUJERO,
Oscar.R.Aujero@nao02.usace.army.mil

Not demanding to compromise quality education

THIS refers to the May 15 editorial ("Higher education lows") of the INQUIRER.

The only unsettled major point of discussion is the CHED (Commission on Higher Education) requirement of a tertiary hospital as training hospital for nursing students. We are awaiting how CHED will address this concern, given that there are only 144 tertiary hospitals nationwide while there are 1,600 cities and towns.

Sen. Juan Flavier wrote that the following agreements were reached during his meeting with Fr. Rolando De la Rosa:

a. That of the 23 problematic schools, three have withdrawn their applications, and that four have already qualified. Of the 16 remaining schools, the CHED has re-sent inspection teams to re-evaluate their applications;

b. That the suggestion for the remaining schools to be allowed to offer two-year courses (e.g. Associate in Health Sciences) with subjects that may be credited towards eventual entry into nursing levels was welcomed. Note that these schools must not advertise these courses as nursing courses. Lastly, that if the suggestion becomes acceptable to them, the licensing processes with respect to these two-year courses will be vested in the Tesda and not in the CHED.

This will allow students in areas with no tertiary hospital to start taking nursing-related subjects in their respective localities and then proceed to graduate in a duly accredited nursing school (most likely far from their own homes). This will help minimize the cost of education for students who live in far-flung areas that are currently served by the schools in question, as it will mean that they only need to spend for board and lodging on their third year.

This leads us to the contention that the over-proliferation of state universities and colleges (SUCs) has caused the quality of tertiary education to decline. Limiting the number of SUCs will allow a more focused allocation of resources and may lead to improved quality of education. However, it does not guarantee that overall competence will increase. What is definite is the decline in the number of Filipinos who are able to gain access to tertiary education.

Our society has placed a premium on documentation as a requisite for employment, thus pushing those with lesser financial means to run after the necessary paperwork that would qualify them to land a job instead of focusing on being educated for its own sake. I contend that we have to first provide the opportunity for livelihood to meet their basic needs. Hopefully, they will do well in their jobs and be able to finance their own further studies in the more established schools. But if we deny them access to a degree that will allow them to land a job, then we are denying them the opportunity not only for better higher education but even the chance for a decent livelihood.

We are not demanding that the CHED compromise the principles of quality education. We want to work with it towards comprehensive and responsive legislation.

—REP. CYNTHIA A. VILLAR

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Ilocos power firm told to refund consumers

BATAC, Ilocos Norte—The Energy Regulation Commission has ordered the Ilocos Norte Electric Cooperative (Inec) to return P102 million in excess charges it collected from its consumers for eight years beginning 1996.

"From 1996 to 2004, there was an overcharging of power rates, so please refund your consumers," ERC Chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. told the Inec during its annual general assembly attended by power consumers on Saturday here.

Albano, who was keynote speaker during the assembly, said the commission arrived at the decision on May 24. The decision was expected to take effect upon Inec's receipt of its copy this week.

After a reconstruction of records and financial statements, the ERC affirmed its earlier findings that Inec collected additional charges due to an error in the computation of power rates.

The amount, however, was lower than the figure that the commission earlier discovered. The commission earlier pegged the overcharges at P123 million.

Albano said the overcharges were largely caused by the incorrect implementation of Republic Act 7832 or the anti-pilferage law.

"Inec pegged its system losses on its average monthly losses and not on its actual system losses [which caused the discrepancy in the computation of rates]," he said.

"We are not blaming Inec officials for these excess charges. We should not impute bad faith against them because they were only implementing rates [that they] believed were correct," Albano said.

"I believe that these excess collections did not line the pockets of Inec officials, otherwise, the cooperative would not have maintained a Class A category," he added.

For years, Inec has been classified as one of 40 "mega large cooperatives" out of the 119 electric cooperatives in the country.

Ilocos Norte is also one of three provinces, next to Ilocos Sur and La Union in the Ilocos region, which is categorized as Class A.

Albano said Inec officials could still appeal the ERC decision or seek legal remedies up to the Supreme Court.

"But should it decide to accept the decision, Inec must refund its consumers for a period of 150 months, equivalent to the period that it collected the excess charges," he said.

According to Albano, Inec officials may opt to return the excess collections in cash or reflect the refund in the future bills of their more than 105,000 consumers.

On top of the P102-million refundable amount, the ERC also reminded Inec to implement a power rate reduction of 15 centavos per kilowatt-hour after its P1.06-billion loan was condoned.

The condonation was a result of an executive order that President Macapagal-Arroyo signed authorizing the Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. (Psalm) to assume the loans incurred by all electric cooperatives in the country.

Albano also advised power cooperatives to implement the recently signed magna carta for residential consumers prescribing the schedule of disconnection of power lines. *Cristina Arzadon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

GMA destabilized power industry reforms with VAT in IPPs, say solons

BAGUIO CITY—The biggest critics of the independent power producers (IPPs) are now taking up their cause against the value added tax (VAT) on power.

The Association of Philippine Electric Cooperatives (Apec) party-list group is asking President Macapagal-Arroyo to exempt the IPPs from the VAT coverage.

The VAT bill, which was signed into law by the President on Tuesday, removed the tax exemptions of the National Power Corp., which originally absorbed the cost of buying electricity from the IPPs.

A consumer tax like VAT allows the power generators to automatically pass this to their clients, said Luis Manuel Corral, Apec secretary general, during a recent press conference here.

Apec Rep. Edgar Valdez, vice chair of the congressional oversight committee on the Electric Power Industry Reform Act (Epira), said Apec's petition is ironic because it still blames the IPP contracts for the debts of the Napocor.

The IPPs are privately owned electric power generating facilities, which have existing purchase contracts with the Napocor.

The contracts' most controversial provision obliges the government to buy IPP power regardless of need or cost.

A VAT on power "clearly destabilizes Malacañang's efforts to deregulate the power industry," Corral said.

Napocor and its power generating assets are being auctioned off as part of power reforms but "the imposition of VAT . . . will lower the bid price for these assets. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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Power firm warns of blackouts in Iloilo

By Nestor Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The Panay Electric Company (Peco) has warned of blackouts in Iloilo City if it implemented an order of the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) to reduce its rates by P2 per kilowatt-hour.

The warning drew condemnation from consumer and militant groups.

In a three-page statement, Edmund Afzelius, Peco senior vice president for operations, said the ERC order would lower the amount it collects as generation charge, which covers the power generation costs and systems losses.

Peco sources 98 percent of the power that it distributes from the Panay Power Corp. (PPC) and 2 percent from its own generators. It is the lone power distributor of Iloilo City's 180 barangays with around 40,000 consumers.

Afzelius said with the order, Peco would pay PPC lower than the actual operation cost.

"With reduction of rates of this magnitude, our supplier (PPC) cannot sustain their operations since prices of fuel have been escalating from month to month. Business simply cannot continue when it is done at a loss," said Afzelius.

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Family begs for release of ex-NPA leader

LUCENA CITY—The family of Ramoncito "Monet" Garcia begged his abductors to "set him free and without any harm" as it prayed deeply and made the rounds of military camps in Quezon in search of him.

"I beg whoever have custody of my Monet, maybe they could not yet release him but please spare him from all harm. He poses no threat to anyone. He's now living peacefully and honestly trying to make both ends meet for his family," said Monet's mother, Venėr Garcia.

She was crying during a phone interview from her house in Manila.

Monet's teenage daughter, Alaiza Jane, who is in Mulanay town, made a similar plea. "We love our father so much, he's been good to us. Whoever got him, I beg of you, please let him go."

On Saturday morning, Monet, a former top New People's Army leader in the Bondoc Peninsula in the 1980s and early 1990s, was abducted by four persons while he was walking along the street at the back of Mulanay town hall.

A witness identified one of the abductors as an Army soldier.

Garcia's wife Liza told the INQUIRER that she believed that it was the military who abducted her husband.

"It was the military that seized him, there's no doubt about that, not her former comrades. I believe that the NPA has long respected his decision to leave the movement for a full-time job of raising his family," Liza said.

Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuay, head of the military's Southern Luzon Command based here, said in a text message to the INQUIRER "that if it's the government soldiers [who are holding Monet], he is safe."

Liza expressed concern over the health of her husband. "He needs to regularly take medicine for his ailments, particularly during a nervous breakdown."

Mulanay Mayor Prudencio Maxino said he has contacted military officials in nearby camps, "but they all denied abducting him. Nevertheless, they all promised that they would conduct further investigation."

He attested that Monet had long been living a peaceful life in Mulanay. "He's now on the government side. As a matter of fact, he's been offering his help in some projects of the local government."

Joselito Ojeda, a relative of Monet and owner of ConAmor Broadcasting System that operates several radio stations and a broadcast television, said he had already issued orders to all his broadcasters and reporters to help locate the victim. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

DELFIN MALLARI JR./PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

LIZA Garcia reads a copy of the INQUIRER yesterday which carried the story of the abduction of her husband.

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ESCAPE OF REBEL LEADER

Gov files charges against jail warden

By Joey A. Gabieta
PDI Visayas Bureau

TACLOBAN CITY—Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone has filed criminal charges against the provincial jail warden and a jail guard for the escape of a top rebel leader in Eastern Visayas and two other inmates on Saturday.

Charged with infidelity in the custody of prisoners were warden Alexandrino Apelado and JO1 Rafael Cesista (not Sesesta as earlier reported).

Provincial legal officer Jesus Apelado (not related to the warden) on Tuesday filed the complaint before the provincial prosecutor's office on orders of the governor.

Tadeos, 40, alias Ka Jonas, secretary general of the communist-led National Democratic Front in the region, and cell mates Rogelio Basibas, 30, and Benjamin Madolid, 20, escaped from the provincial jail in Barangay Bato in the capital town of Borongan following a drinking session with Cesista.

Evardone said the charges would not have any bearing on the investigation being conducted by a special committee chaired by provincial prosecutor Vicente Catudio.

"I expect that they will come-up with impartial results and that there would be no whitewash on the investigation," Evardone said.

The governor relieved Apelado from his post and designated his provincial information officer Franklin Robedizo as officer-in-charge of the jail facility.

He also ordered the indefinite suspension on Cesista, the lone guard on duty when rebel leader Gregorio Tadeos and two others escaped on May 21.

"I don't tolerate this kind of shenanigan. I will not hesitate to impose severe penalty on those involved ... based on evidence," Evardone said in an interview.

He said Apelado was relieved based on the principle of command responsibility. Cesista, however, was suspended indefinitely due to the gravity of his offense.

The inmates went to the guardhouse after taking dinner at about 7 p.m. on Saturday. The jail policy was to lock the doors of the cell at 5 p.m.

Investigation showed that the inmates and Cesista were talking while drinking beer when the jail guard noticed two vans passing outside the main gate.

When the vans passed by the gate thrice, Cesista told an inmate-trustee to check it out. The inmate reported to him that one of the vans was colored maroon. The other was blue, which was driven by a woman dressed in a habit.

Tadeos pulled out a .38 cal. pistol hidden in his pants and poked it at Cesista's forehead. Basibas then took the shotgun displayed at the guardhouse, pointed it at the guard and pulled the trigger. It was not loaded, however.

Cesista admitted that when he heard the trigger, he ducked and ran. He said he panicked and forgot to fire his .45 cal. pistol.

The three inmates told the trustees not to go after them before running toward the hills at the back of the provincial jail.

Pergentino Derion Jr., Tadeos' lawyer, urged his client to surrender and face the string of criminal cases filed against him.

Tadeos is facing criminal cases involving murder, illegal possession of firearms and robbery in band before the Regional Trial Court in Oras, Eastern Samar. Madolid has been accused of homicide and frustrated homicide, while Basibas has been charged with murder.

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Camarines power co-op hikes rate by ₱0.55

NAGA CITY—The Camarines Sur II Electric Cooperative (Casureco II) will collect an additional P0.5525 for every kilowatt-hour consumption starting this month as a result of an increase in charges by the National Power Corp.

Rolando Pante, spokesperson of Casureco II, said consumers would be paying P6.4681/kwh, up from the previous P5.9156.

Pante said the power rate increase was an offshoot of a decision by the Energy and Regulatory Commission approving the power generation charge to power cooperatives.

The increase in power rates followed the adoption of the so-called recovery scheme whenever additional tax or rate is imposed on power co-ops, Pante added.

Aside from the additional impositions from Napocor, power co-ops also reacted to value-added tax, real property tax and other taxes that the government imposes on them.

Pante said the Casureco II has yet to compute and submit for approval to the ERC a further increase in power rate. The firm, he said, was still waiting for guidelines of the newly approved VAT law for the computation of the new power rate increase.

Another factor that prompted the power rate increase is the taxes that the local government units might impose on power co-ops, Pante said.

Following the declassification of the power co-ops from the list of cooperatives exempted from any government taxes, an additional increase is possible, he said.

But he said that as long as the LGU defers its tax collection, the power co-ops would have no reason to apply for more increases. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Puerto Princesa beset by frequent brownouts

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—This capital city and neighboring municipalities have been experiencing power outages due to inadequate fuel supply and power plant machines, and unless local officials step intervene, a power crisis is in the offing.

Mayor Edward Hagedorn blamed the National Power Corp. (Napocor) for the frequent brownouts over the past several weeks.

He said officials of Delta P., the operator of the 16-megawatt plant in the city, told him that it was losing around P85 million from its operations.

Under its contract with Delta P., Napocor buys electricity from Delta P. at P5 per kilowatt-hour (kWh). Napocor, in turn, sells power to the Palawan Electric Cooperative at a price lower than what Delta P. charges because it has been subsidizing electricity throughout Palawan.

Delta P. is seeking approval of an increase of P1.40/kWh from the Energy Regulatory Commission.

Hagedorn said that if the request would not be granted, Delta P. will be forced to close down..Its supply of bunker fuel will last only until June 6, he said.

Because of heavy losses, Delta P. could no longer maintain all its four power-generating machines, the mayor said. Only two are currently working, he added.

Moreover, Hagedorn said Napocor had not been paying the power plant its cost for "block starting," amounting to around P8 million. Block starting refers to the period during which the power plant has to stabilize operations for about an hour after a power outage.

In case Delta P. decided to shut down, Napocor could take over power generation as it has enough power plants to meet the city's needs, said Lorenzo Marcelo, vice president of Napocor's Small Power Utilities Group.

He said the petition for rate increase of the power plant was already with the ERC.

ERC Chair Rodolfo Albano, in a radio interview, said the agency would not allow power interruptions in Palawan.

He said he already received a letter from Gov. Joel Reyes asking for his intervention. The ERC met on Saturday to decide on the problem. *Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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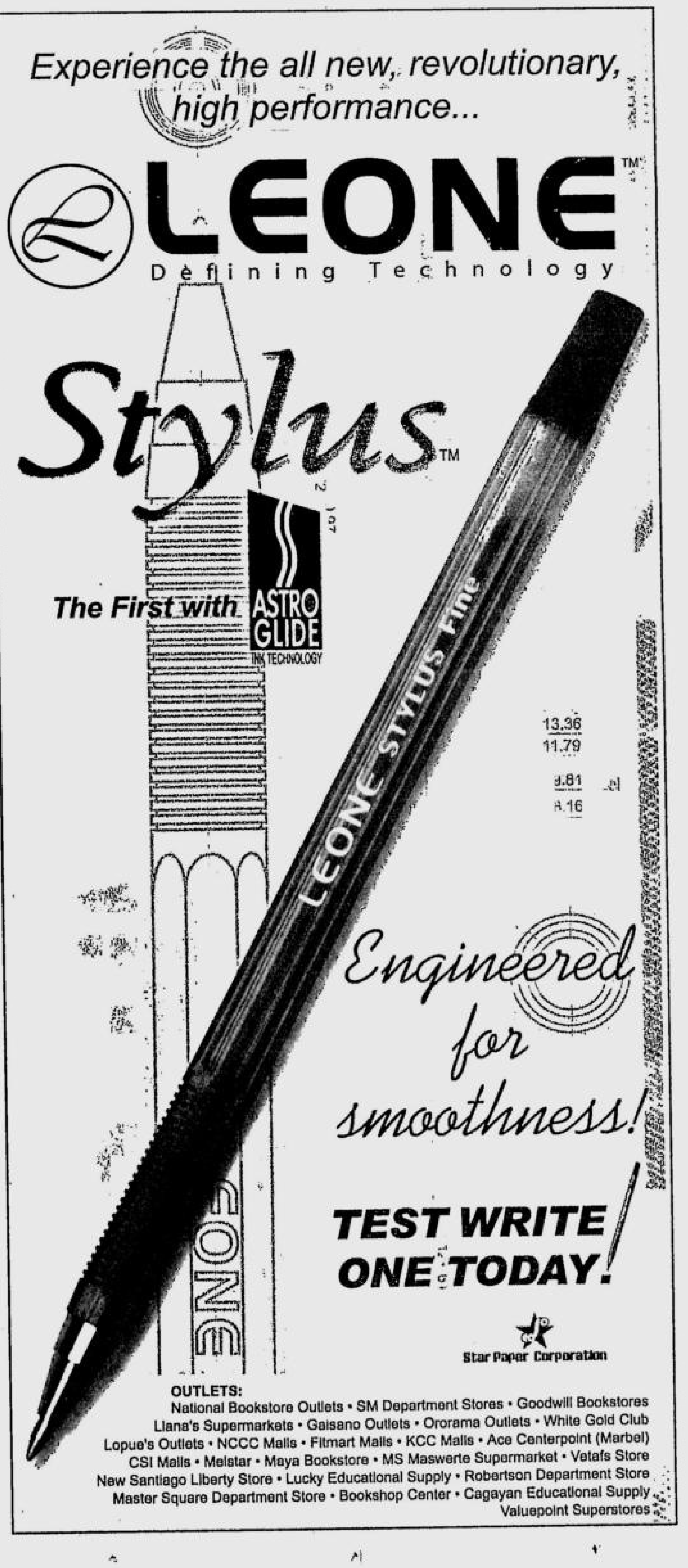

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Judge junks petition of suspect in Esperat slay

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Judge Francis Palmones Jr. of the Regional Trial Court Branch 20 in Tacurong City on Thursday junked a petition for review and recall of warrants of arrest issued against the main suspects in the March 24 killing of journalist Marlene Esperat.

In their petition, Osmeña Montañer, finance officer of the Department of Agriculture in Soccsksargen (Region 12) and Estrella Sabay, DA-12 budget officer, told the court that during the arraignment of the four suspected gunmen, they pleaded not guilty to the charges.

Montañer and Sabay, through their lawyers, said the not-guilty plea was tantamount to exonerating them from the crime.

Former Army Sgt. Rowie Barua, former close-in security of Sabay, named Montañer and his boss as the ones who ordered Esperat's murder.

He said they were paid P120,000 to kill the journalist.

When she was still working as chemist at the DA regional office, Esperat filed graft charges against Montañer, Sabay and other agriculture officials.

Montañer has maintained innocence of the crime and questioned his inclusion in the charges.

State Prosecutor Nestor Lazaro said in his counter-petition that Montañer and Sabay could not question the warrants issued against them because they remained at large.

Montañer and Sabay have stopped reporting for work. They are now the subjects of a police manhunt.

Palmones agreed with Lazaro, saying that the two suspects had yet to submit themselves under the jurisdiction of the court.

Palmones cited a Supreme Court decision which stated that any pleading filed in court before the arrest of the accused was premature.

Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Court orders reinvestigation of radioman's slay

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The Aklan Regional Trial Court has suspended the arraignment of Mayor Fred Arcenio of Lezo town, the principal suspect in the killing of broadcaster Herson "Boy" Hinolan, and ordered the provincial prosecutor's office to reinvestigate the case.

In an order dated May 4, Judge Ledelia Aragona-Biliran of the RTC Branch 2 granted the motion of private prosecutor Napoleon Oducado for a fresh investigation.

Biliran ordered the prosecutor's office to issue a resolution within 60 days as he suspended Arcenio's arraignment for the same period or until a new resolution has been issued.

Last month, Arcenio posted a P40,000 bail.

In his motion, Oducado questioned the March 3 resolution of assistant provincial prosecutor Apolinario Barrios, indicting Arcenio for homicide.

Oducado claimed "clear proof of treachery and evident premeditation" in Hinolan's killing which warranted a murder charge.

He cited the testimonies of witnesses Peter Melgar and Marjorie Icamina to back up his motion.

Melgar alleged that he saw Arcenio running after Hinolan and repeatedly shooting the victim, while Icamina claimed to have overheard an aide of the mayor talking about the plan to kill the broadcaster.

Defense counsel Lou Tirol opposed Oducado's motion on the ground of speedy trial for his client.

In his resolution, Barrios said there was no evidence that the shooting was premeditated because Melgar only saw the actual shooting but not the preceding events.

Baseless

Hinolan, 38, was repeatedly shot on Nov. 13 as he was urinating near a carnival in the capital town of Kalibo.

The broadcaster died two days later due to serious injuries in the stomach and liver. He was the station manager of dyIN Bombo Radyo in Kalibo and hosted the station's morning program "Bombohanay Bigtime."

In his counter-affidavit, Mayor Arcenio denied the accusation, calling the testimonies "baseless and concocted."

He claimed he was in Lezo at the time of the shooting.

The case of another murdered Aklan journalist has also been on appeal.

Roland Ureta's widow filed a petition for review before the Regional State Prosecutor's Office on April 26 after the Aklan provincial prosecutor's office dismissed the murder complaint filed against the suspects in her husband's killing.

In her petition, Emely Ureta said investigating prosecutor Barrios "gravely abused his discretion" in dismissing the complaint against Jessie Ticar, Amador Raz and two unidentified suspects.

In his ruling, Barrios said the lone witness in the killing, Gerson Sonio, lied when he claimed that he was near the place where Ticar and Raz repeatedly shot the victim.

Barrios said the witness' testimony was contradicted by Gerson's father Perlito Sonio and uncle Diego Masangya, who executed separate affidavits claiming that the witness was in Iloilo City when the broadcaster was shot.

Rolando, program director of dyKR-RMN in Kalibo, was gunned down on Jan. 3, 2001 along the national highway in Barangay Bagtu, Lezo, 7 km west of Kalibo.

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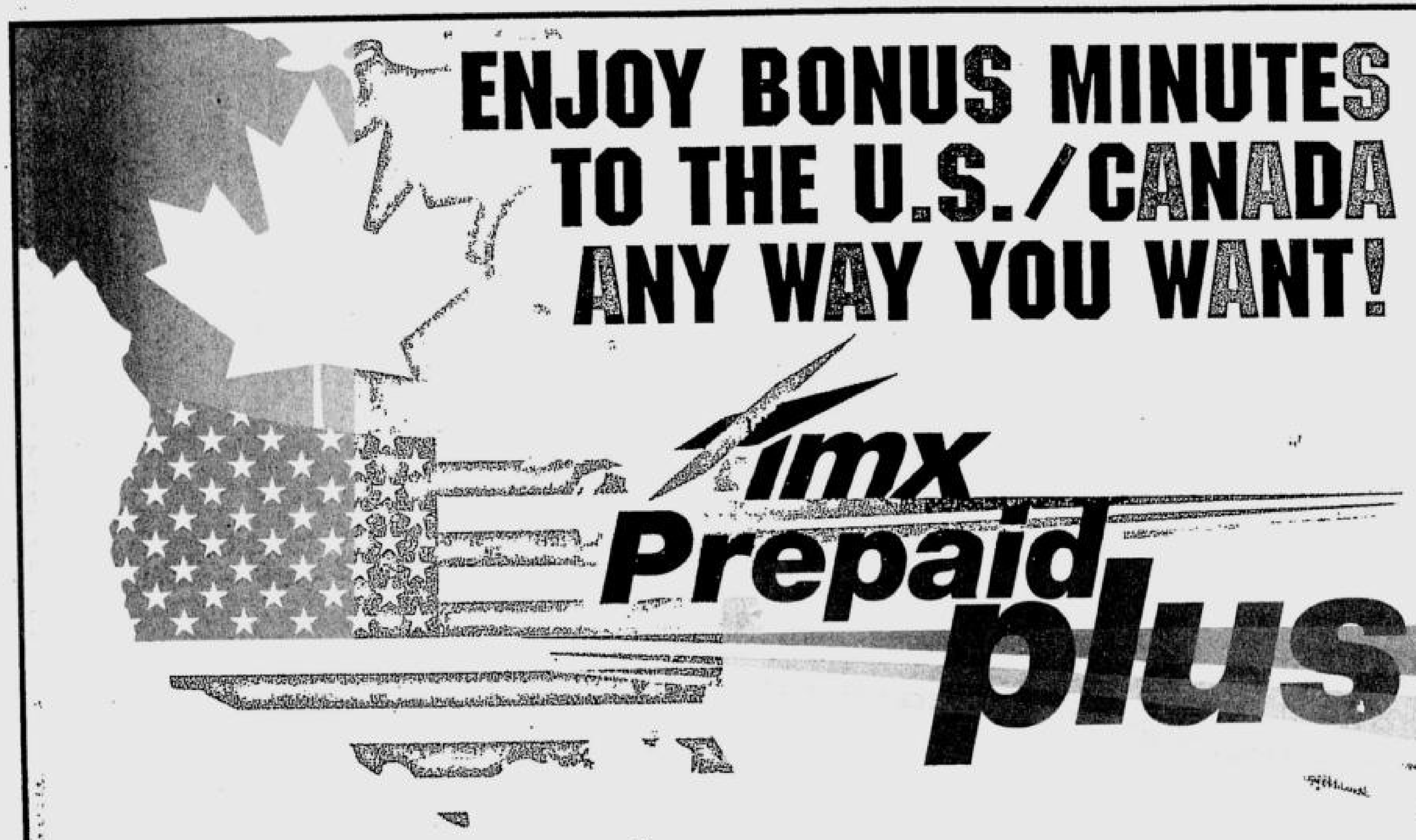

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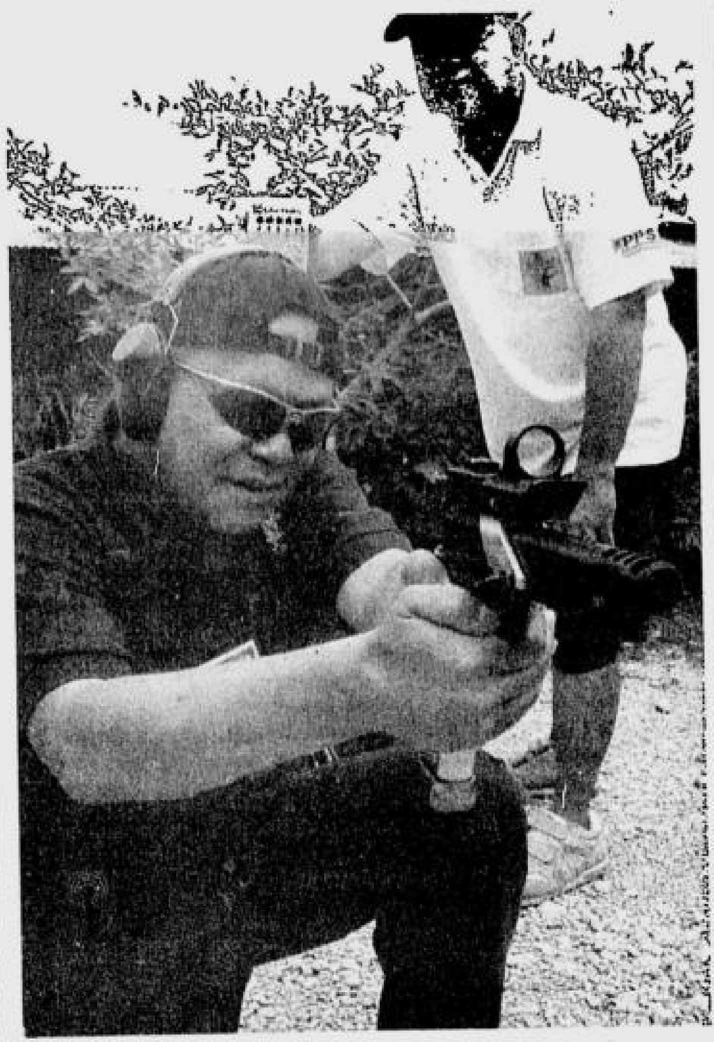

A CORDILLERA-based journalist goes through a refresher on firearms handling from shooting range owner Frank Lopes at Badiwan, Tuba, Benguet. TOOTS SOBERANO/ PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Journalists to be given police escorts in Sulu

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

JOLO, Sulu—Journalists covering stories in Sulu will be provided police escorts to protect them from armed groups, including the Abu Sayyaf.

"What we are implementing right now is … direct and indirect security protection to local and national journalists covering the remote areas of the island," said Supt. Suaibon Jalad, Sulu police director.

He said the measure was one of the steps taken by police authorities to prevent the repeat of past incidents that had journalists as victims.

These included kidnappings, as in the cases of some foreign and local journalists who covered the Sipadan hostage crisis.

Other newsmen were murdered in recent years.

Killings in Sulu are rarely solved. Among the cases is the November 2004 killing of former INQUIRER correspondent Gene Boyd Lumawag.

Lumawag was covering for the independent news outfit MindaNews when he was shot at close range by an alleged Abu Sayyaf bandit near the public market here.

He died on the spot from a single bullet in the head.

Jalad said the suspect had already moved out of Jolo and joined an Abu Sayyaf faction in Indanan town.

Senior Supt. Sukarno Ikbala, chief of police of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, said journalists visiting Sulu would get a round-the-clock police protection.

NORTHERN MINDANAO

21 schools increase tuition

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Twenty-one private schools in Northern Mindanao will be increasing tuition this coming school year, according to the Commission on Higher Education regional office.

Publio Eguna, Education Specialist 3 of the CHEd regional office, said two other schools wanted to increase tuition, but the agency had not acknowledged their proposals for their failure to submit certain documents.

The tuition increases range from three to 25 percent.

Private schools are required to secure the CHEd acknowledgement before they can impose increases in fees.

One of the biggest private schools here, the Jesuit-run Xavier University, will collect an additional 8 percent increase in tuition, or P465.50 per unit starting the first semester.

Cagayan de Oro City College said tuition would go up to P381.58 per unit or a 12-percent increase from the previous semester's rate.

Capitol University said it would impose a five-percent increase. Its tuition last year was P297.57.

Eguna said the CHEd has acknowledged the proposals because of the "prevailing inflationary rate."

Earlier, President Macapagal-Arroyo asked private schools not to increase tuition to help parents cope with financial difficulties.

"It is now up to these schools whether they would consider the President's plea," Eguna said.

He said the CHEd would continue to monitor other schools which might raise tuition without informing the agency first. "There had been reports [of such cases] in the past," he said.

For Liceo De Cagayan University here and Misamis University in Oroquieta City, they could only implement tuition increases once they submitted the documents required before the opening of classes.

Visayas

In Iloilo City, one out of three private schools in Western Visayas will increase tuition by an average of 11.84 percent, data from the CHEd regional office showed.

Twenty-three of the 75 private schools will raise fees by an average of P7.35 per unit to P57.10. This would increase the average tuition in the region to P345.11 per unit.

Eleven schools will increase tuition in Iloilo. These are Colegio de San Jose, De Paul College, Iloilo Doctors' College, Colegio del Sagrado Corazon de Jesus, John B. Lacson Colleges Foundation (JBLCF-Arevalo), JBLCF-Molo, St. Therese-MTC La Paz, St. Therese-MTC La Fiesta, St. Therese-MTC Tigbauan, Western Institute of Technology and St. Anne College.

In Negros Occidental, the nine schools that will increase fees are Binalbagan Catholic College, Fellowship Baptist College-Kabankalan, La Consolacion College-Bacolod, Mt. Carmel College, Colegio de Sta. Rita, University of St. La Salle, University of Negros Occidental-Recoletos, Colegio de San Agustin-Bacolod, and West Negros College.

Other schools that will raise tuition are St. Anthony's College (Antique) and the Filamer Christian College and La Salle-Roxas, both in Capiz.

The militant youth group Anakbayan said the continued increases in school fees would drive more students to quit school, especially those coming from poor families and fixed-income earners.

Karen Edaniel, spokesperson of Anakbayan in Iloilo, said it was deplorable that more than half of the national budget was used to pay the country's foreign debt while the government could not provide for the education of the youth.

She said the recent order of President Arroyo, declaring a moratorium on tuition increases in state colleges and universities, was a "mere facelift" aimed at improving the President's "sagging popularity."

"This moratorium is not necessary if the government is providing enough budget for the SCUs … The only solution to the problem is to raise the budget for the SCUs and the country's educational system" said Edaniel in a statement.

Schools

In Sulu, close to 4,000 elementary and high school teachers are awaiting the opening of classes next month. But almost 400 school buildings in the island are not ready to accommodate about 160,000 students.

"The buildings require renovation and repair. If the primary schools here in Jolo are dilapidated, just imagine the situation in the interior and remote towns," said Efremio Canaria, education supervisor of Sulu's Department of Education.

Of Sulu's 410 barangays, 105 still do not have schools. *Grace Cantal-Albasin and Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Nestor P. Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau*

5 children drown off Batangas isle

CALAMBA CITY—Five youngsters, aged 8-11, drowned after strong waves smashed the small boat they were riding on off a small island in Barangay Wawa, Batangas City, yesterday.

Archie Navarro, one of the rescuers from the Batangas Emergency Medical Service, identified the victims as Joemar, 8; Jun Mark, 11; Johndel, 9; Joycel, 10, all surnamed Dela Roca; and Pablo Garcia, 9.

All of them were from the island village of Malitam.

Navarro said Joemar, his brother Jun Mark, his cousin Joycel and Garcia were declared dead on arrival at the Golden Gate General Hospital.

Joemar's brother Johndel died while being brought to the St. Patrick Hospital.

Navarro said his group received a telephone call from the local office of the Department of Social Welfare and Development informing them about a drowning incident in a remote coastal village.

He said they immediately went to the area at around 12 noon, together with members of the city fire department.

Navarro and other rescuers tried to revive the victims but their frail bodies simply could not take in the volume of seawater while they were drowning.

"None of them knew how to swim," Navarro told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Marivic dela Roca, the victims' aunt, said they last saw the children playing on the shores of Malitam at around 10 a.m.

She said they didn't notice that the victims had boarded a small wooden boat owned by her neighbor, Bonifacio Magpantay, and that they had paddled toward Barangay Wawa where some of their relatives were having a picnic.

Navarro said strong waves caused by winds and torrential rains might have moved the small boat some 250 meters away from the shoreline.

He said fisherman Ryan Abu was among the first to see the children struggling for life at around 11 a.m. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

ROUNDUP

Grounded PAL plane

TACLOBAN CITY—A Philippine Airlines Boeing 737 bound for Manila was grounded at the DZR Airport here on Saturday afternoon due to a major damage in its left engine. The plane arrived from Manila at about 3 p.m. and was supposed to fly back about 30 minutes later. About 150 passengers of PR flight 194 were not allowed to board the aircraft and were told that a mechanic would be flown in from Manila to repair its engine. At about 7 p.m., the passengers were told that PAL would just bring in another aircraft, which arrived three hours later. After waiting for about seven hours, the passengers finally left Tacloban at about 10:30 p.m.

Cyrain Cabueñas, PDI Visayas Bureau

P170M for Albay road

LIBON, Albay—President Macapagal-Arroyo released on Friday P170 million for the construction of the Libon-Pantao road to speed up development of the Pantao port, a major regional project of the government at Albay's western coast. The President also inaugurated Phase 1 of the P520-million Pantao port, which was started in November 2002, according to Rep. Joey Salceda. The Pantao port project aims to remove Bicol from its current place as the second poorest region by providing jobs and spurring development through trade and commerce. He said that Bicol will have more business volume with its access to the Visayan and Mindanao markets once the port is operational.

Michael B. Jaucian and Niño Jesus Orbeta, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Maguindanao election exec slain

COTABATO CITY—An election officer of Barira, Maguindanao was shot dead allegedly by a member of a paramilitary force on May 22. But police authorities said the 9 a.m. killing of Election Officer Omar Marandang near his house in Parang town by militiaman Badrudin Sarudtong was not related to the election or his being a Commission on Elections official. "That was purely personal," said Maguindanao police director Senior Supt. Mejor Midbantao, who claimed that the two were involved in a family feud. He said Sarudtong killed Marandang with an M-14 rifle at the Parang-Barira junction road. Marandang died from multiple bullet wounds and was immediately buried in accordance with the Islamic practice of burying the dead before sunset. The suspect has remained at large. Midbantao said a case of murder had already been filed against the suspect.

Charlie C. Señase and Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Gov cleared of fund misuse charges

TUGUEGARAO CITY—The Sandiganbayan has cleared Kalinga Gov. Dominador Belac and three other officials of fund misuse charges filed by the provincial board in 1998. In a decision handed down in April, the Sandiganbayan's first division said the prosecution failed to prove that Belac, provincial treasurer Juan Boguen, budget officer Noe Dannang and acting accountant Thomas Tubban connived to falsify public documents when they processed the allotment request and other documents to buy a Nissan Safari vehicle for the governor's office in 1998. The Sandiganbayan said the officials could not be held liable for the offense because it was the board's committee on finance and appropriation that ordered the preparation of the check that paid for the vehicle.

Villamor Visaya Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

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RP consulate in Hong Kong asked to account for death assistance

CALABANGA, Camarines Sur—Inconsolable and still indebted, the parents of a teacher-turned-domestic helper, who died under suspicious circumstances in Hong Kong, demanded an explanation from the Philippine consulate there why they could not be provided death assistance and the salary balance of their daughter.

Romulo and Eden Aguado, whose daughter Zhirida, 28, allegedly committed suicide in a Hong Kong house on May 11, claimed on Wednesday that they were given confusing explanations why the death assistance of HK$21,000 from the employer and the salary balance of HK$3,000 could not be sent to them.

Romulo, 54, said he talked on the phone with a certain Tita Cora from the Philippine consulate in Hong Kong, who told him that the HK$21,000 had been used to repatriate the body of his daughter to Manila and the HK$3,000, from Manila to their town.

Representatives from the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration brought the body on Tuesday at the Aguado's home in Barangay Sta. Cruz here.

Romulo said it was only after they called up the consulate that they got confirmation about the death assistance and the salary balance that had been turned over to government representatives.

He said a certain Mr. Cheung, the Chinese employer, informed him when he called up on May 17 that the money had already been given. This prompted him to call up the consulate.

Eden, 51, said the money was needed to cover the expenses for a decent burial. She said they still had to pay for her daughter's placement and travel fees.

She could not believe that her daughter committed suicide because, she said, she found no reason for her daughter to kill herself.

"Three days before she died, I talked with her on the phone," Eden said.

Zhirida was a reluctant domestic helper, but her daughter made a gamble to accept the employment offered by Dahlzen International Services to save money because she was planning to apply for a teaching job in Europe, Eden said.

"My daughter had a big dream. How could she contemplate committing suicide?" she asked.

She said their suspicion of foul play had been confirmed by circumstances as relayed to them by a relative, Sylvia Guerrero, who also works as a domestic helper in Hong Kong.

Eden claimed that Guerrero was allowed by Hong Kong police to enter the house of Cheung when her body was still there.

She said their relative told them that the room where Zhirida could have hanged herself was almost as high as their daughter and that there was no place where the rope could be tied.

Romulo said Cheung had promised him more money if they would not file a case in court against him.

Zhirida went to Hong Kong on March 9 and died on May 11 at her employers' house. *Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

COMMUNITY CONCERN
A rare "pawikan," a female green turtle weighing 70 kilos, was released back to the sea after being rescued from a fisherman in Laiya, San Juan, Batangas. JOSEPH AGCAOILI

Ex-councilor held for vehicle theft

TABACO CITY—A former municipal councilor and son of a former town mayor in Catanduanes was arrested by lawmen here on Friday night by virtue of a warrant of arrest issued against him for car theft.

Chief Insp. Rio Gatacilo, Tabaco City police chief, identified the suspect as Zaldy Idanan, 42, son of former Caramoran town mayor Lourdes Idanan.

Gatacilo said Idanan was arrested at about 10:15 p.m. after one of his men spotted the suspect.

Idanan is facing a case of car theft at the Virac Regional Trial Court Branch 42 while another case of robbery was being filed before Branch 43 of the same RTC.

Idanan served as municipal councilor for two consecutive terms but lost in the last election, together with his mother who also sought reelection.

Idanan told the INQUIRER that the case was filed by his ex-girlfriend after he left her several months ago.

He said it stemmed from a motorcycle they bought, which he registered in the name of his former live-in partner Elena Agripa of Pandan, Catanduanes.

Judge Antonio Ayo Jr. of Virac RTC recommended no bail for Idanan.

PO3 Nicasio Buenconsejo, who arrested Idanan, said that after the arrest, the suspect showed him bundles of P1,000 bills and told him to release him first because he was waiting for his lawyer who would settle the case.

Buenconsejo, however, refused.

Supt. Frank Peñaflor, Catanduanes police director, said Idanan had a pending case of illegal logging, a reason why the suspect was in hiding.

A former vice mayor of this city was said to be coddling Idanan since the suspect went on hiding in February this year. *Job B. Belen, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

2 mayors confuse Zambo Sur townsfolk

PAGADIAN CITY—Confusion as to who the real mayor is continues to reign in Labangan, Zamboanga del Sur.

Employees said they do not know whose orders to follow as Mayor Abubakar Nandang Afdal refused to acknowledge the recent decision of a regional trial court judge here, which declared his rival, Uray Mamaludin "as the true choice" of the people of Labangan.

Mamaludin contested Afdal's victory in the May 2004 elections by filing a petition for judicial recount before the RTC Branch 18 under Judge Reinerio Ramas.

On May 16, Ramas promulgated his ruling and declared Mamaludin winner of last year's mayoral race.

Based on the final court recount, Mamaludin got 7,759 votes as against Afdal's 6,689, or a difference of 870 votes.

Afdal questioned the decision, saying he could not understand how Ramas came up with the figures.

He said previous recounts made by the same court showed him leading by at least 100 votes.

"Where did my votes go?" he asked.

A few days after the decision was handed down, Mamaludin took her oath of office before Ramas and held office in the barangay hall of Lantian, about 6 km from the municipal hall where Afdal continues to hold office.

Both mayors have issued orders directing employees to report to their respective offices.

Some employees have started reporting to Mamaludin, while others continued to report to Afdal.

Residents were also getting confused.

Those transacting business with the municipal government said they did now know whose signature they would seek for some documents.

Afdal said he hoped the situation would be resolved. He said his lawyers had already questioned Mamaludin's assumption of office before the Commission on Elections central office in Manila.

"My lawyers will obtain a (temporary restraining order) and the soonest will be on Tuesday next week," he said.

"I appeal to the people of Labangan to be calm and soon the confusion about who is the real mayor would be over," he said.

Afdal admitted that the mayoral row had somewhat created tension between him and Mamaludin. But he said the issue could be peacefully resolved.

Supt. Eldorado Gallego, provincial police deputy commander, said troops had been deployed to the town and that "the tension is manageable."

"Labangan is peaceful," he said.

Senior Supt. Karib Muaamil, Zamboanga del Sur police chief, said the Labangan standoff "is controllable." *Michael Sarcauga, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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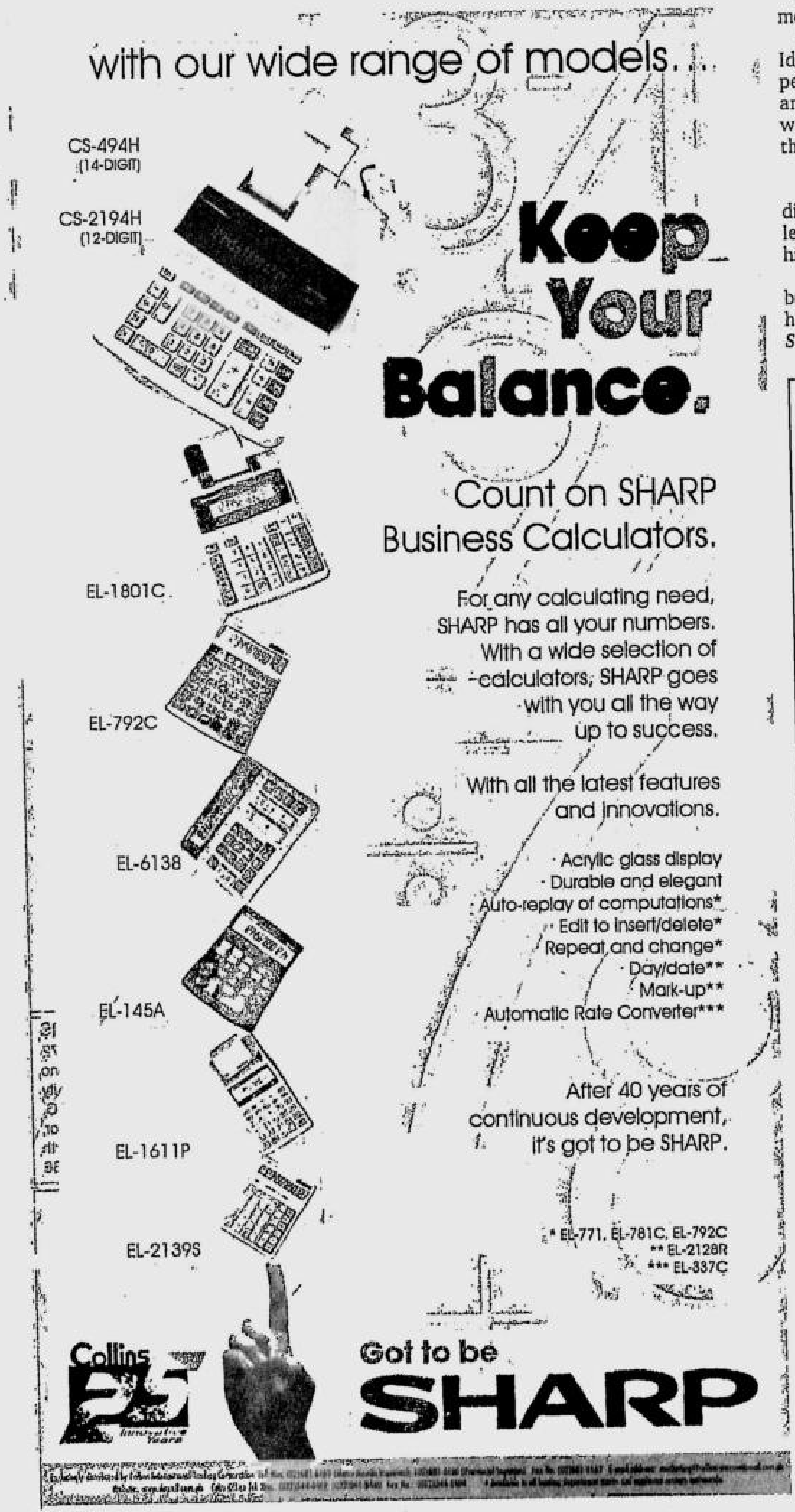

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Two die in Tondo blaze

By Tarra V. Quismundo

IN 40 minutes, two persons were killed and five were injured in a blaze that damaged a two-story house in Tondo, Manila.

Unable to breathe amid thick smoke that filled their second-floor bedroom, 50-year-old Leticia Uy and her grandchild, 10-year-old Aya Yoshida, died early yesterday morning.

Fire had engulfed their house on Coral Street.

In a report, SFO1 Wilson Tana said the fire of still unknown origin began at 6:24 a.m. at the second floor of Uy's house.

Five suffer burns

The blaze also injured three-month-old Aiko Heart Agapay, who suffered third degree burns.

Her three relatives, Maria Florida Agapay, 31, Drian Uy and Kara Agapay, both 5, suffered second-degree burns. Another 5-year-old, Chelnie Uy, sustained bruises in the arms.

Sketchy reports said the victims were sleeping when tragedy struck. All managed to flee, except for Yoshida, Manila's Bureau of Fire Protection said.

Uy reportedly ran back into the burning house to rescue the girl but failed to come back out.

When firefighters finally put out the blaze at 7:03 a.m., P50,000 worth of property had already been destroyed.

MMDA prepares for floods as school opening nears

By Tarra V. Quismundo and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

JUST as students prepared to go back to school, the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority is moving to ensure that these are not caught in floods brought about by the rainy season.

MMDA officials reminded residents yesterday that misplaced garbage could mean flooded streets.

"Once you throw garbage on the street, it has nowhere else to go but the drain," said MMDA Deputy Chair Cesar Lacuna, who leads the agency's flood control efforts.

He then added that clogged drains resulted in floods, which are known to strand Metro folk including students on their way to or from school.

Thus with the onset of the rains and of the school opening, the MMDA has intensified clearing and declogging of the creeks, drainage systems, canals, and waterways in the metropolis.

Taking priority are the University Belt in Manila and Commonwealth Avenue in Quezon City.

But MMDA appealed for Metro Manila residents to do their part by properly disposing of their garbage.

"It would be much harder to retrieve garbage once it is in the drain. Clogged canals and drains are among the reasons we have pocket flooding in some areas," Lacuna said.

The deputy chair said the agency's 1,000-strong flood control crews in 11 district field offices had been conducting nonstop drainage clearing operations.

Lacuna admitted that the agency had yet to solve flooding in places like Dimasalang and España in Manila, which are low-lying areas.

Meanwhile, the police aired its own appeal in relation to the opening of classes.

Pasig City police chief Celso Beltran asked parents to tell their children not to talk to strangers.

He warned of a trick by thieves who confront students on the street, pretending to be the children's parents.

The tricksters then lead children to a secluded place where they forcibly take their victims' valuables.

Children should also avoid buying food off campus, said Eastern Police District director Oscar Valenzuela.

He explained that they could fall prey to robbers or to vendors of contaminated food.

"Parents and students should be very smart," he added.

He said newcomers from the provinces should be extra careful as they could be likely victims of criminals.

Valenzuela said they would deploy at least two policemen at every school.

Apart from becoming hangouts of criminals, schools are also expected to experience heavy traffic as classes resume next Monday.

With Chicklet Millo and Anne Tuppal

Reenactment of Ramos slay set

INSIDE the house they once entered as burglars, three men would return to reprise the roles they had played more than a month ago.

Currently in detention, Roberto Lumagui, Joel Ablay, and Michael Cenil, the men tagged in the killing of Foreign Affairs Assistant Secretary Alicia Ramos, will again set foot inside the diplomat's house tomorrow to reenact the April 24 burglary.

"If their lawyers would agree, we would ask them to reenact what happened. They have the right to protect themselves from self-incrimination, but they have already confessed and it would be better if they agree [to staging a reenactment]," said State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco.

The visit to 5552 Boyle Street, Barangay Palanan, Makati City, is part of the preliminary investigation of the case. *Tarra V. Quismundo*

Las Piñas has 700 new scholars

LAS PIÑAS City has granted scholarships to 700 college freshmen taking up business courses at the Dr. Filemon C. Aguilar Memorial College under its "free college education for the poor" program.

Mayor Imelda T. Aguilar said the city would take care of the scholars' tuition, miscellaneous and graduation fees.

Aguilar stressed that the scholarship was not limited to honor students, but to those from the less privileged families.

"It is my vision to afford every Las Piñero equal opportunity to free college education, regardless of their scholastic standing, as long as they wish to obtain a college diploma for them to have a brighter future," Aguilar said.

The DFCAMC, accredited by the Commission on Higher Education, was established in 1998 through the initiative and funding by the city government.

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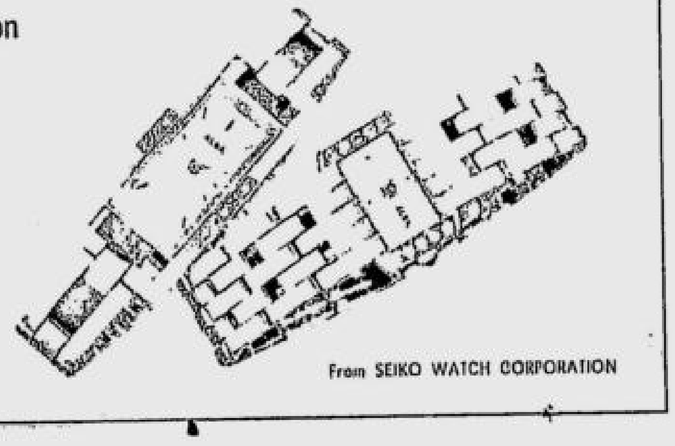

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MONDAY, MAY 30, 2005

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MIX-UP AT AIRPORT X-RAY LINE

Batanes gov returns bag of Japanese

By Volt Contreras

IT WAS just a mix-up, after all.

Batanes Gov. Vicente Gato returned yesterday the money of Japanese Akira Maki after the bag where it was placed was unintentionally picked up by an aide of the official at the Manila Domestic Airport Friday morning.

Gato showed up at the airport's VIP lounge at 6:30 a.m. to return the bag to Maki, who thanked the governor and the government for the speedy recovery, said Octavio Lina, assistant general manager of the Manila International Airport Authority.

Lina clarified that while earlier reports put the lost amount at $20,000, a count showed it to be actually $17,978 only. Lina said Maki "acknowledged that it was complete."

Lost at the X-ray

Maki, a correspondent of the Tokyo Broadcasting System, lost the bag with the money at the X-ray machine at the airport.

"He had already given up hope, actually," Lina said of the foreign journalist in a phone interview.

Gato told the INQUIRER in a mobile phone interview on Sunday that his police escort took Maki's bag by mistake.

The governor and his aide were next to Maki in the line at the X-ray machine.

Gato's flight to Batanes was cancelled on Saturday. He returned to his Metro Manila residence not knowing that his police aide was carrying Maki's bag.

Another aide of Gato said they did not know that Maki's bag was with them because it was left in the governor's car along with his other luggage.

Discovered Saturday

The governor only discovered the bag after airport officials called him up Saturday night. Airport officials had reviewed pictures taken by security cameras and saw Gato behind Maki at the airport line.

Gato said Ivatans, the natives of Batanes, were known for their honesty and they would not do anything to tarnish this image.

"Kaming mga Pilipino, karamihan sa amin, honest lalong-lalo na ang mga taga-Batanes (Most Filipinos are honest, especially those from Batanes)," the governor said.

He added, *"Ang karamihan sa mga Ivatan ay hindi kumukuha ng hindi sa kanila.* (Most Ivatans do not take others' belongings)." *With a report from Juliet Cataluña, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau.*

Off-duty cop kills 1 of 3 rob suspects

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr. and DJ Yap

OFF DUTY lawman PO1 Leonilo Llonoso was at the right place at the right time to stop a daring daylight robbery.

Llonoso of the Special Action Force based in Camp Bagong Diwa, Taguig City, shot dead one robber and helped capture another, notwithstanding the escape of a third suspect.

According to police, three men took a Marikina City-bound jeepney at the corner of Aurora Boulevard and J.P. Rizal Street in Project 4, Quezon City, at about 8 a.m.

After the jeepney passed Katipunan Avenue, the three pulled out fanknives and declared a robbery. They then began taking the cash and valuables of about five passengers, who included Llonoso.

In casual clothes

But instead of handing over his valuables, Llonoso in casual clothes pulled out his service firearm and challenged the robbers.

Spooked, the robbers tried to flee but Llonoso gave chase.

He caught up with suspect Christopher Cabiles, 27, who reportedly resisted arrest and was shot by the lawman.

Marikina City policemen heard the gunshot and responded. They arrested another suspect identified in various police reports as "Richard de Leon" and "Richard Lopez," 23, of Antipolo City.

The third suspect managed to escape.

The arrested suspect was turned over to the police in Quezon City, which is handling the case.

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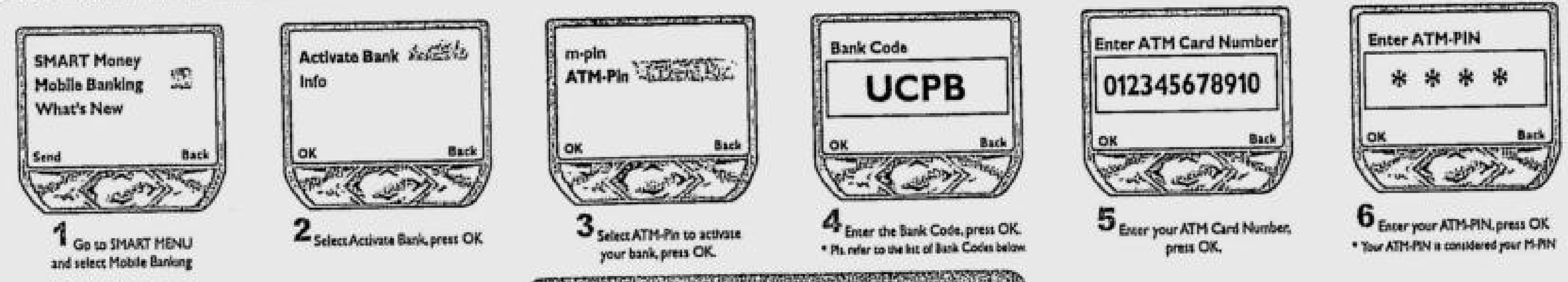

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01011	EQUITABLE VISA
06001	INFOCOM
06002	PACIFIC INTERNET
05012	PLDT
01009	SECURITY INT'L CREDITCARD (FORMERLY DINERS CLUB)
03006	SMART
01018	UNIONBANK VISA

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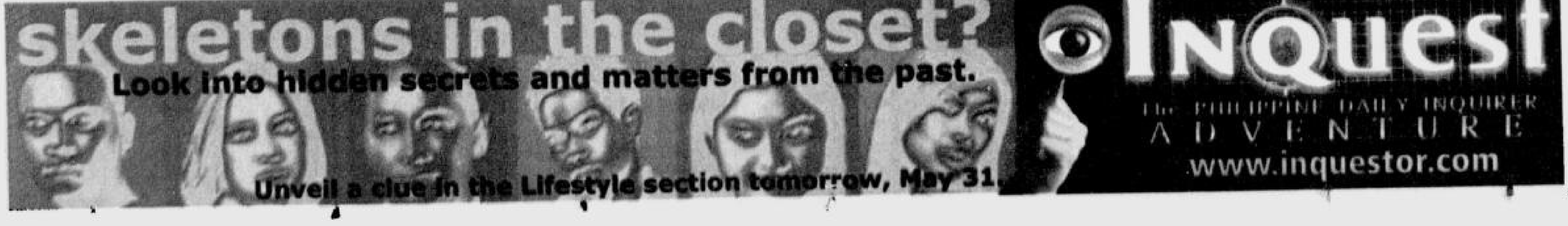
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MOTOR SPORTS: F1 European Grand Prix; 5:15 p.m. (r); STAR Sports—Take another look at the weekend's race

BASKETBALL: NBA Playoffs—Heat vs Pistons, Game 3, Eastern Finals; 8 a.m. (r-9 p.m.); Solar Sports at RPN 9—The scene shifts to Detroit.

TENNIS: 2005 French Open; 6 p.m.; Sports Plus—It's down to the final 16 at Roland Garros.

Compiled by L. Manguiat

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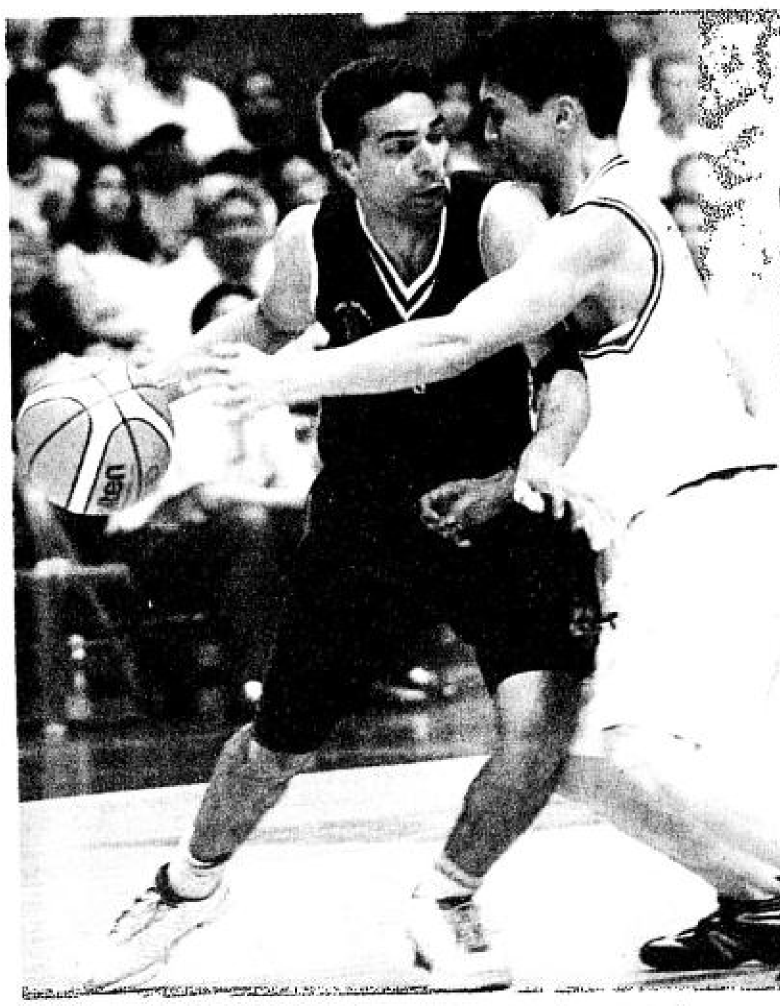
Nationals overwhelm Indians



SAN MIGUEL-RP point guard Jimmy Alapag (right) gives his Indian counterpart Sambhah Kadam a tough time to set up play. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

GAMES TODAY (*Araneta Coliseum*)
12:30 p.m.—Qatar vs UAE
2:45 p.m.—India vs Iran
5 p.m.—Jordan vs Kuwait
7:15 p.m.— Kazakhstan vs Philippines

By Musong R. Castillo

CHOT Reyes was quick to shrug off congratulations after steering the Philippines past a club team from India last night, having less than a day to prepare the Filipinos for their most dangerous foes in the Fiba-Asia Champion's Cup.

The San Miguel Beer-backed Nationals played hard enough to trounce the Indians, 81-49, at the start of the 10-nation event and will face Kazakhstan today with Reyes having nary an idea on how to play his next opponent.

"We were hardly tested today and it would be very hard to say where this team is right now," Reyes said. "Tomorrow will be a good test for us because we have no idea of how they (Kazakhs) play."

Kazakhstan beat a team of PBA stars during the Asian Games bronze medal match in Busan, South Korea, in 2002.

"We didn't have the opportunity to scout them," Reyes admitted. "We will go into the game blind. But it will give us the chance to see how our team adjusts to situations."

Against the loose, slower Indians last night, the Nationals zoomed to an 11-0 lead and were never really threatened.

San Miguel Beer power forward Nic Belasco led all Filipinos with 14 markers and four others scored 10 or better in a balanced attack that speaks well of the chemistry of the team formed just two months ago.

The Philippines has won this tournament a total of four times in the past, the last in 1996 with the Hapee Toothpaste team built around Tony "The Hurricane" Harris and Chinese star Ma Jian.

Earlier, Saba Battery-Iran used a solid second half to humble defending champion La Sagesse-Lebanon, 71-51.

American reinforcement Andre Pitts led all Iranian scorers with 24 points with Hamed Afaghe Eslamieh and Medhi Kamarai adding 19 and 12, respectively.

Also making its presence felt was Al Kuwait, which edged Army-Syria, 89-85, in overtime, to share the early lead with the Filipinos and Iran.

American reinforcement Chudney Grey tossed in 26 points, but it was Abdulaziz Shuaib who won the game for the Kuwaitis by banging in a triple from mid-court with six seconds to go that broke the last tie at 85.

Jameel Watkins, who played for Shell in last year's Fiesta Conference, is the other Kuwaiti import.

The scores:

First Game

IRAN 71—Pitts 24, Hamed 19, Samad 12, Medhi 5, Aydin 3, Aloreza 2, Kamran 2, Rouzbabahami 2, Hall 2, Bezrad 0.

LEBANON 51—Fadi 15, Bassem 12, Saterfield 10, Elie 5, Khoudry 5, Howard 4, Sabah 0.

Quarters: 11-18; 23-28; 45-37; 71-51

Second Game

KUWAIT 89—Chudney 26, Ahmed 16, Yahee 13, Osamah 12, Watkins 11, Abdulaziz 5, Khaled 4, Tahir 2, Salem 0.

SYRIA 85— Rutland 32, Carter 23, Yaser 11, Al-Hakam 7, Rami 6, Radwan 4, Alaaeddin 2, Khaled 0, Osama 0.

Quarters: 17-19; 32-36; 55-57; 74-74; 89-85

Third Game

PHILIPPINES 81—Belasco 14, Caguioa 12, Miller 12, Hontiveros 11, Adducul 10, Alapag 8, De Ocampo 5, Thoss 5, Dela Cruz 4, Villanueva 3, Reavies 2, Ritualo 0.

INDIA 49—Robinson 14, Riyazuddin 7, Thomas 6, Trideep Rai 6, Shabeer Ahmeo 6, Singh 4, Kumar 3, Shendy 1, Kadam 0, Singh 0.

Quarters: 28-14; 42-18; 68-37; 81-49

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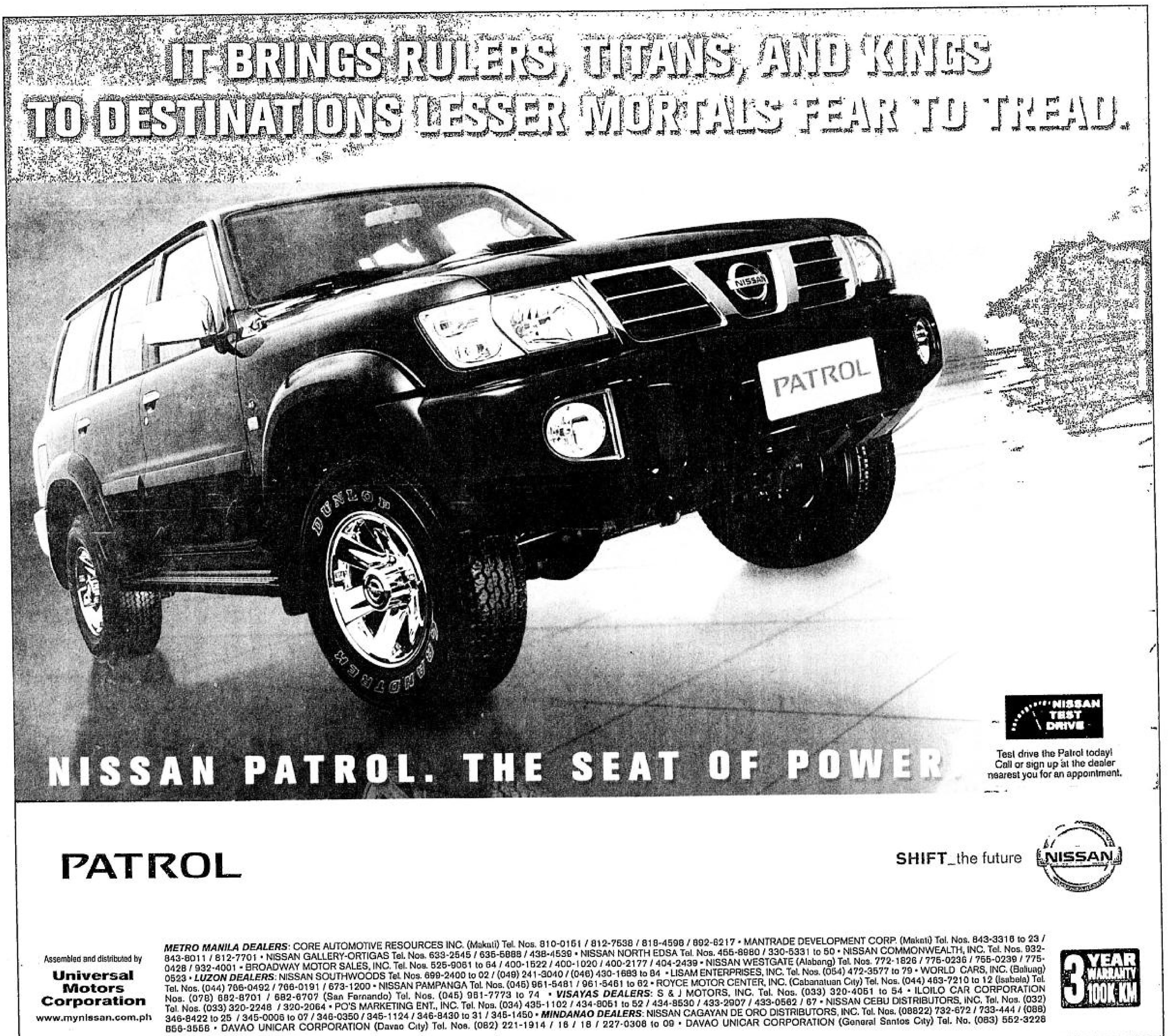
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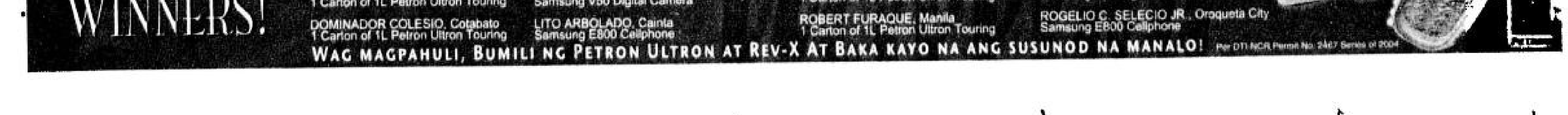
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Rare 1-2 windup for Atilanos

By Marc Anthony Reyes

OLONGAPO CITY—Brothers Lito and Elmer Atilano, who as kids used to fight over who takes his turn at their father's bike, pulled off a rare feat when they finished 1-2 in Stage 4 of the Golden Tour 50@05 here yesterday.

While the leading riders took it easy, the Atilanos stormed away from a five-man lead pack in Dinalupihan, Bataan, and became the first siblings to dominate a leg in bikathon history by topping the 133.6-km race from Malolos, Bulacan.

(Stage results on A28)

"We didn't plan to win the stage," said Lito Atilano, the elder at 25, who finished fifth overall in last year's Tour Pilipinas and is part of the national team to the Southeast Asian Games.

"The zig-zag (in Dinalupihan) gave us the opportunity to break away," added Lito, who checked in half a wheel ahead of his younger brother with a time of three hours eight minutes and 37 seconds.

The stage win moved Lito Atilano from 19th to 13th overall, 8:39 off Warren Davadilla, who easily retained the yellow jersey of leadership by coming home in the main pack with his chief challengers led by Rhyan Tanguilig.

Elmer Atilano, riding for Metro Drug like Lito, stood 50th overall, 18:51 off Davadilla.

Carlo Jasul of Colt 45 salvaged third place for the day, finishing 1:39 behind the Atilanos and just four seconds ahead of teammate Johnny Dasalla.

Jonathan Paras, the fifth member of the lead pack, arrived with the 20-man fourth group which checked in five seconds behind Dasalla.

Davadilla, the winner of the second and third laps, spent the race closely watching PLDT skipper Tanguilig, who trails him by 2:25. Touch Mobile's Alvin Benosa and Santy Barnachea kept third and fourth spots, 3:30 and 5:11 away, respectively.

Rounding out the Top 10 were Fernando Alagano of Metro Drug (6:19), Mcquin Aleonar of VATt Riders (6:39), JR Lopez of Metro Drug (6:57), 2003 champ Arnel Quirimit of Tourism (7:09), Reynaldo Navarro of Customs (7:25) and erstwhile 11th placer Sherwin Diamsay of Tourism (7:44).

The sprinters are expected to take over in today's 205.5-km Stage 5 ending in Alaminos City in Pangasinan, but legendary speedster Enrique Domingo won't be among them.

Domingo of Guerrero Brandy figured in a spill as the peloton got caught in a traffic jam in Lubao, Pampanga, and spent a lot of effort catching up with his peers.

The 36-year-old Domingo, who is running 44th, more than 15 minutes off Davadilla, crashed after he was hit by the handle bar of PLDT's Roberto Pagala, whose bike got caught in a truck bumper.

With a broken bike frame, Pagala came home among the day's tailenders.

THE ATILANO brothers, Lito (right) and Elmer, celebrate at the finish. BOY CABRIDO

The Atilanos, whose father Emio was also a bike enthusiast in Roxas, Oriental Mindoro, and teammate Benito Lopez Jr. joined an original 10-man group that broke away in San Fernando, Pampanga.

The lead pack was down to five when it reached Balanga City in Bataan, some 50 km from the finish, and the Atilanos, Paras, Jasul and Dasalla sustained their breakaway despite briefly losing their way going to the Balanga Capitol Hall.

"Our coach told us to help our teammates," said Elmer, 23, in Filipino. "But there were only five of us left and it's normal that Lito and I will help each other."

Taking turns up front, the Atilanos slowly pulled away from their breakaway partners in the uphill stretch going to the Dinalupihan Nature Center and succeeded in scoring a first in bikathon lore.

Metro Drug seizes team overall lead

OLONGAPO—The Metro Drug team swept the first two places in the individual race from Malolos, Bulacan, to here yesterday to wrest overall leadership in the team event of the Tanduay presents...Golden Tour 50@05.

Colt 45 dropped to second after two laps on top even with Carlo Jasul and teammate Joel Dasalla checking in third and fourth, respectively, after the 133.60-km grind, with Guerrero Brandy staying in third.

The Road Warriors, though, now have a 5:41.060 deficit to work on, up from 3:41 before the start of the lap, heading into the final six stages of the tour.

GB skipper Enrique Domingo suffered a nasty spill in the early stages of the sprint and his assistant Danny Ganigan crashed heading into the climb, greatly affecting the team's performance.

Coach Renato Dolosa, the 1995 champ, however, remained confident and said the tour's crucial stages have yet to come.

"*Matagal pa ang karera* (The race is still in the early stages)," he said. "*Doon lang talaga magkaka-alaman sa Baguio* (Everything will be settled in Baguio)."

THE LEAGUE'S collection of all-time greats brings the crowd back to the days when basketball was mainly driven by passion and character. The Legends showed they still had ample reserves of both. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

PBA GREATEST GAME

Legends outshine Greats; 12 make it to Hall of Fame

By Musong R. Castillo

SAMBOY Lim was in his trademark knee-high socks and played in pain.

Mon Fernandez nailed a hook shot that looked as elegant as ever.

Philip Cezar, even in an exhibition game, still refused to acknowledge a foul slapped on him.

Such scenes exemplified the Philippine Basketball Association in its early years—in games that were high-scoring, free-wheeling and loaded with character.

It was not so much that the Legends rallied to nip the Greats, 96-92, but the league's much-hyped Greatest Game was a reminder to all of the humble beginning of what has now become the Filipino's way of life.

The induction of the first 12 members to the league's Hall of Fame provided some poignant moments before tip-off, and the Juan dela Cruz band succeeded in evoking nostalgia in the proceedings.

Coach Baby Dalupan acknowledged the cheers in his own limited way. Fernandez was feted with adjectives worthy of a god, and Robert Jaworski drew the loudest applause while virtually touching the fans with a gesture he's always been great at.

Francis Arnaiz failed to make it to his enshrinement, but the applause could be heard from far away.

William "Bogs" Adornado was his usual calm self, and not even the baritone voice of commissioner Noli Eala could match the omnipresent voice of the PBA that was Joe Cantada's, the only media man named to the Hall.

Atoy Co and Cezar were the other Redmanizers inducted, while the architect of that glorious team, the late Danny Floro, was the only team manager in the group.

Founding commissioner Leo Prieto was indisposed and could not make it. The late Emerson Coseteng was also inducted together with Rudy Salud to complete the first 12 members of the Hall.

A modest-sized crowd braved a strong afternoon downpour and stayed well into Saturday night to witness the game that was all but a classic, but enjoyable nonetheless.

It was like one's life flashed before his eyes, with the evening's only letdown being Jaworski not fielding himself in despite the crowd's repeated chants of his name.

"I enjoyed the night. It's always a joy to see and coach friends of old," said Dalupan, the winning coach who got help in calling the shots from San Miguel's Jong Uichico.

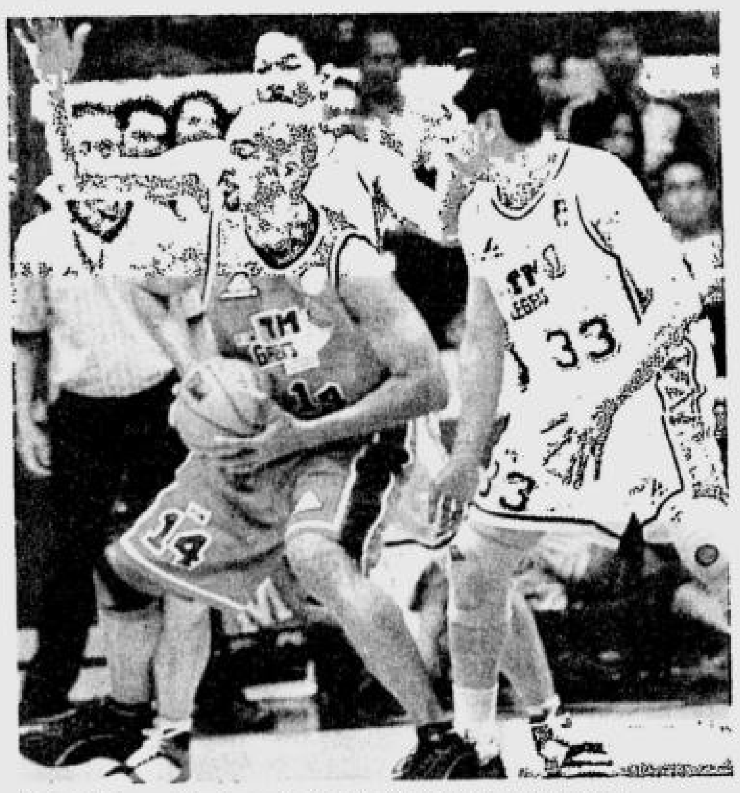
Allan Caidic bagged the MVP award with a 30-point, eight-rebound, three-assist and three-steal effort.

The scores:

LEGENDS 96—Caidic 30, Meneses 21, Lastimosa 9, Calma 8, Patrimonio 8, Hubalde 6, Adornado 6, Codinera 6, Co 2, Cezar 0.

GREATS 92—Lim 29, Paras 19, Duremdes 14, Abarrientos 11, Magsanoc 8, Agustin 6, Lim Eng Beng 3, Fernandez 2, Paner 0.

Quarters: 24-32, 54-all, 72-78, 96-92.


BENJIE Paras tries to wriggle out of trap laid out by Bogs Adornado (33) and Philip Cezar. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

No Fiba-Asia stand on BAP case—Go

THE SECRETARY general of the region's governing body for basketball, Fiba-Asia, was merely stating a fact and not relaying the federation's decision when he declared that Fiba-Asia still recognized the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

Dato Yeoh Cho Hok of Malaysia said on Saturday that since Fiba-Asia had not taken up the matter of the BAP suspension by the Philippine Olympic Committee, the international basketball federation still recognized BAP.

POC special assistant Go Teng Kok yesterday said the statement of Yeoh, who is in Manila for the 10-nation Champion's Cup tournament, may have been taken out of context.

Go said the POC was not expecting Fiba-Asia officials, including its president, Sheik Saud Ali Al-Tani of Qatar, to make any decision on the status of the BAP until after they have investigated the BAP suspension.

"Even then, Fiba 'World' [Fiba-Asia's parent body] will still have the final say," Go explained. "If Fiba world believes that the problem can be settled at the level of Fiba-Asia then that is the time Fiba-Asia will make the call."

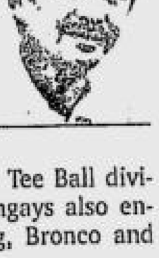
"The indefinite suspension of the BAP is within the powers of the POC as the Olympic body in the Philippines," added Go, who is the POC's top overseer of the Champion's Cup tourney.

"The POC has always relayed information on the BAP to the world governing body, Fiba. POC also has furnished Fiba-Asia documents that chronicled the events leading to the suspension."

Go accused BAP officials of deceiving Fiba-Asia officials and of claiming that the POC is in no position to suspend an erring national sports association.

Report from Marikina

BARE EYE



Recah Trinidad

FOR a change of pace, here's a report from a sports development devotee and fan of MMDA chair Bayani Fernando.

* * *

It's not generally known to its neighbors, but Marikina, a liveable and orderly city, has also morphed into a very dynamic baseball community.

In a span of two years since the Marikina Youth Baseball/Softball Foundation Inc. (MYBSF) was founded by Ricky Florencio, the baseball boom in Marikina has become very evident.

The boom all started with a program called Teeball. Conceived for kids 8 years and under, the program became a big hit not only among the parents and grandparents, but for all members of the family who escorted their thumb-sucking toddlers to the tournament. The elders were thrilled all the way, as they watched, cheered and rooted for their young ones who would swing widely at the ball placed on top of a tee and run in unpredictable directions, fumble and bungle in catching and throwing aimlessly.

This was evident in the recent Vice Mayor Andres Inter-Barangay Teeball Tournament which ended last May 12, wherein eight barangays of Marikina and two guest teams participated. Aside from the Tee Ball division, the participating barangays also entered teams in the Mustang, Bronco and Pony divisions.

Adding impact to the growth of baseball in Marikina is the bonding of the coaches and trainers under the Foundation. These coaches who volunteered their services for the sake of the kids and for the love of game formed their own team called D'Coaches to play softball games against other baseball/softball players who are now in their 40s and 50s, thereby setting a good example to the younger generation.

Then came the designation of the City of Marikina as host to the 2005 PONY Asia-Pacific Bronco Baseball Championship from July 20-26 featuring 11-12- year-old players from Japan, South Korea, Chinese Taipei and Singapore against our Team Philippines.

In this international baseball competition—the first in this country for this age level—the Philippines will be represented by the Marikina Bronco Selection, who bagged the runner-up trophy behind the well-funded and Hawaii-bound Ayala Alabang Team last May 22 in their initial tune-up games. The 9- to 10-year-old players under the Marikina Mustang Division similarly notched the runner-up position against the Hawaii-bound Ayala Alabang Mustang selection.

With the respectable finish, these ragtag baseball kids of Marikina, who learned to play baseball through the mentoring of volunteer coaches, using donated baseball gloves, bats and balls on crude, sun-baked baseball grounds, earned the admiration of the affluent baseball crowd of the Ayala Alabang Country Club.

Recently, Marikina Mayor Marides C. Fernando and Mr. Rodolfo "Totoy" Tingzon, the president of the Philippine Tot Baseball Foundation and regional director of the PONY for South East Asia, signed a memorandum of agreement for this international event.

Furthermore, next December, Marikina will host baseball boys from Yachimata City of Japan, which hopes to become a sister city of Marikina through a baseball program.

Needless to say, Marikina promises to be a force to reckon with in baseball.

RAYMUND Sangil of Riviera (left) hugs his buddy Kevin Tayao of Sta. Elena after their duel ended on the 14th hole. ROMY HOMILLADA

FIRST CLUB CHAMPIONS' WINNER

Hot Sangil routs pal Tayao for NTCC title

By Jong Arcano

RAYMUND Sangil had wanted to face anybody but Kevin Tayao in the final of the National Tournament of Club Champions.

They're the best of friends, they often play together in member-guest events and even shared a room for the duration of the country's first battle of club titleholders.

Yesterday's finale presented a difficult situation because one of them had to lose.

In the end, it was Sangil who captured the men's division championship as the Sta. Elena bet Tayao didn't get the breaks he needed against one who was playing so well at the Faldo course of the Eagle Ridge Golf and Country Club in Gen. Trias, Cavite.

Aided by Tayao's lapses, the 28-year-old Sangil broke out of a tight match by taking five holes in an eight-hole span from No. 6 and went on to score a lopsided 5-and-4 win he considers as one of his biggest achievements yet.

Riviera sweep

Sangil thus completed a title sweep for the Riviera Golf and Country Club after Katrina Gonzales snatched the ladies' crown Saturday of the tournament presented by INQUIRER Golf and Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp. (HSBC) in coordination with the Golf Distributors Association of the Philippines.

Gonzales, 18, pulled off a lopsided 7-and-5 victory over Wack Wack's Leana Farrales in the finals.

As their prizes, Sangil and Gonzales will head for opposite directions of the globe to attend prestigious events sponsored by HSBC. Sangil will go to the HSBC World Match Play in Wentworth, England, this September while Gonzales proceeds to the World Ladies Match Play in New Jersey this June.

Tayao and Farrales each received Limited Philippine edition watches from Omega.

Losing semifinalists Marty Ilagan of Manila Southwoods, Abe Avena of Mt. Malarayat, Kathleen Uy of Cebu and Vinice Godio of Alabang won golf bags from Mizuno.

The country's first-ever tournament for club champions was also supported by Toyota Innova as its official vehicle, Philippine Airlines as the official airline, Titleist as the official ball and Microtel as the official hotel. The other sponsors are Print Town, Aviva Insurance, GG&A Club Shares, Mizuno, Nike Golf, Ayala Greenfield Estates, Coppertone Sport and Sunbolt Sports Drink.

Showdown clincher

Tayao birdied the fifth hole to keep abreast of Sangil, but a three-putt miscue on the next hole started his downfall.

Sangil, golf division manager of Mizuno Phils., took Nos. 8 and 9 to go 3-up and won the 10th with a par as Tayao bogeyed after missing the green. Tayao won a hole for the second and last time on the 11th but Sangil took the 12th and 13th to clinch the showdown.

The tournament showcased the four-course might of Eagle Ridge where its four superb courses drew praises from the entries including those from Visayas and Mindanao.

Engineer Wini Gob, project director of Eagle Ridge, said they took pride in being able to successfully host the inaugural NTCC.

"We'll be ready to host it again and the kind words we received from the entries can only inspire us to work harder to be able to stage more significant events such as this one," he said.

Tournament director Andy Dumlao also credited the team of general manager James Balagtas, golf directors Dan Salvador and Dan Cruz, as well as Alvin Ortega, food and beverage manager Sol Cano, Ronald Dizon and the club's tournament staff for a job well done.

Reyes tops Lapid golf

ROBERT Reyes shot a net 68 Friday to capture overall honors in the first Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid Invitational at the Riviera Golf and Country Club's Couples course in Silang, Cavite. Gerald Katigbak carded a 70 to top Class A, Jeric Santos made a 68 to rule Class B and Roy Sangil shot a 69 to win Class C honors in the 18-hole event Lapid launched to raise funds for his Youth Development Program. Beng Iboo made a 68 to rule the ladies' division in the event backed by the Philippine Sports Commission, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp., Department of Tourism, Unilever and Mizuno.

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Coordinator: Alex Dinoy
Mobile no.: 0916-5146384
Tel. no.: (02) 744-1664

BAGUIO (Northern Luzon Leg)
Schedule: July 9-10, 2005
Venue: SM City Baguio (Lower Ground, Atrium)
Coordinators: Briccio Cesar Domondon Jr.
Tel. no.: (074) 4469103
Alden Espanillo
Mobile no.: 0915-5037455
Alex Dinoy
Mobile no.: 0916-5146384
Tel. no.: (02) 744-1664

TUGUEGARAO (Northern Luzon Leg)
Schedule: July 23-24, 2005
Venue: People's Gymnasium
Coordinator: Mariano Cabugos
Tel. no.: (078) 8442894

BATANGAS (Southern Luzon Leg)
Schedule: August 6-7, 2005
Venue: SM City Batangas (Entertainment Plaza)
Coordinators: Cris Olan
Tel. no.: (043) 7232568; (043) 7234246
Alex Dinoy
Mobile no.: 0916-5146384
Tel. no.: (02) 744-1664

CEBU (Visayas Leg)
Schedule: August 20-21, 2005
Venue: SM City Cebu (Entertainment Plaza)
Coordinator: Ben Macapaz
Tel. no.: (032) 3443748

ILOILO (Visayas Leg)
Schedule: September 3-4, 2005
Venue: SM City Iloilo (3/F, Activity Center)
Coordinator: Cesar Mariano
Mobile no.: 0919-2833826 Tel. no.: (033) 338-1492

DAVAO (Mindanao Leg)
Schedule: September 17-18, 2005
Venue: Gaisano Mall (G/F, Atrium)
Coordinator: James Infiesto
Mobile no.: 0917-7042198
Telefax no.: (082) 297-6776

CAGAYAN DE ORO (Mindanao Leg)
Schedule: October 1-2, 2005
Venue: Lim Ketkai Mall (G/F, Rotonda)
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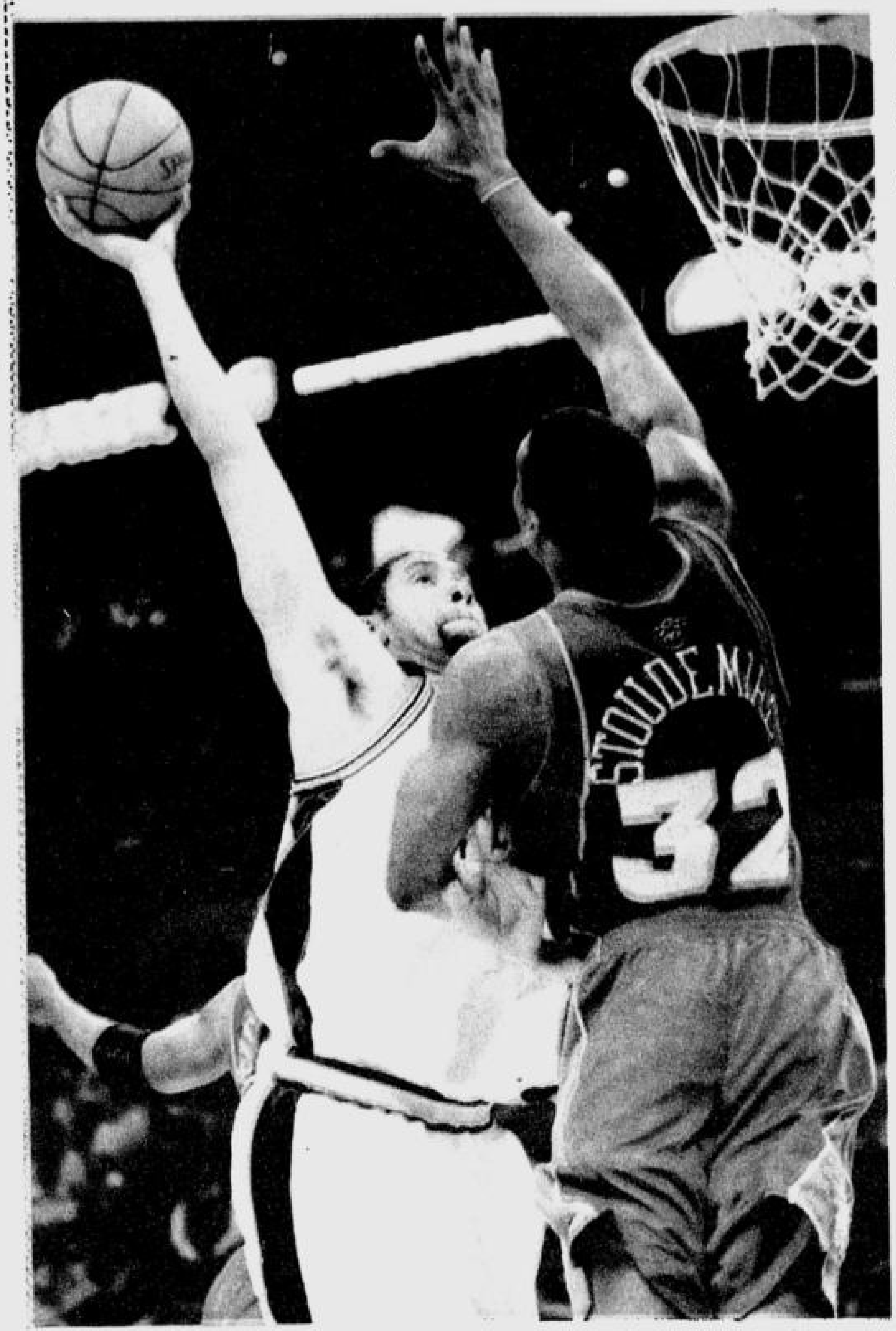


SAN ANTONIO forward Tim Duncan (left) shoots over Phoenix's Amare Stoudemire. REUTERS

Spurs cloud Suns' hope, near sweep

SAN ANTONIO—Tim Duncan and the San Antonio Spurs dismantled everything the Phoenix Suns tried for most of Game 3 of the Western Conference finals Saturday to take a 102-92 victory that puts them on the brink of reaching the championship round.

San Antonio held Phoenix under 106 points for the first time this postseason, mainly by giving up just 36 first-half points, including a measly 10 in the second quarter. The Suns finally made a charge in the fourth quarter, getting within six twice in the final minute, but the Spurs fought it off with Duncan and Manu Ginobili going 6-of-6 from the foul line.

"I think the guys realized again who they are," San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich said.

The Spurs lead 3-0, and no team ever rallied from that deficit to win a series in the NBA playoffs. Phoenix seems pretty unlikely to change it; if the young Suns weren't rattled by getting outscored twice at home by defense-oriented San Antonio, then this throttling had to leave them shaking their heads.

Game 4 is Monday. The Suns can send the series back to Phoenix with a win, while a San Antonio victory would put the Spurs into the NBA Finals for the second time in three years and third time in seven.

"We haven't found a way to stop them yet," said Phoenix's Steve Nash, whose streak of four straight games with 25 points and 10 assists came crashing down with 20 and three. He also committed six turnovers.

"There was a stretch there in the second quarter when we couldn't make any plays, couldn't get any momentum and we put our heads down. That made it impossible for us to come back in the second half."

The Spurs won both times they were there, beating the New York Knicks in 1999 and the New Jersey Nets in 2003.

Duncan led San Antonio with 33 points, 15 rebounds and three blocks. A mediocre foul shooter most of his career, he was perfect on 15 attempts and hit tough several baskets in the closing minutes to help hold off Phoenix's charge. An appreciative crowd responded by standing and chanting "M-V-P!" during his final four freethrows.

Tony Parker had 18 points and seven assists and Ginobili had 18 points and seven rebounds, including the final one, which he cradled while time ran out on San Antonio's fifth straight victory and 44th in 48 home games this season.

Amare Stoudemire led the Suns with 34 points, but it was his lowest in seven games this season against the Spurs. He scored 16 in the fourth quarter, helping Phoenix go down fighting.

Joe Johnson was solid in his first game since breaking a bone near his left eye May 11, hitting his first two shots and scoring 15 points. He was 6-of-14, including 2-of-3 on 3-pointers. His return was supposed to make Nash more effective, but that was hardly the case.

Frustrated by the way San Antonio packed the lane and detonated their pick-and-roll, Nash had no assists in the first quarter, one in the second and none in the third. *AP*

7-foot-8 Chinese eyes NBA

HONG KONG—A 22-year-old, 7-foot-8 Chinese basketball player hopes to follow in the footsteps of Houston Rockets center Yao Ming and crack the NBA, a Hong Kong newspaper reported Sunday.

Sun Mingming, two inches taller than Yao, has attended a training camp in the United States watched by NBA scouts and hopes to be picked in the NBA draft next month, the South China Morning Post reported.

If Sun is signed by an NBA team, he would become the tallest player in the league's history.

According to the Guinness Book of Records, 7-foot-7, Romanian-born Gheorghe Muresan is the tallest player ever in the NBA.

Former NBA player Keith Gatlin said Sun is a 70-percent shooter. *AP*

Safin keeps cool, boots out rival Ferrero

SAFIN REUTERS

PARIS—Cap backward, his dialogue with himself rarely pausing, Marat Safin negotiated around danger once more in his zigzag path through the French Open for a shot at a second straight Grand Slam title.

He didn't break a racket or even throw one. He kept his cursing to a mild mutter.

"It's a one-man conversation," he said. "Nobody's answering, which is good."

Down in each of the first two sets and thrashed in the third, the Russian escaped each time by calling on his full range of shots—serves in the 190-kph (120-mph) range; punishing, two-fisted backhands; exquisite touch for a big man on lobs and drops, and more volleys than in the past—to post a 7-6 (5), 7-5, 1-6, 7-6 (2) victory Saturday over 2003 champion Juan Carlos Ferrero of Spain.

"It was a great match, I will remember it, I will get it on video," said Safin, who spent much of his youth in Spain and still trains there part of the year. "A few years ago we were newcomers. Now we are 25 and we have spent a lot of time here. It's becoming a classic between us."

The third-seeded Safin, reaching the round of 16 along with last year's runner-up and No. 8 seed Guillermo Coria, has been squeezed into the background the first week of the tournament by No. 1 Roger Federer's bid for a career Grand Slam and 18-year-old phenom Rafael Nadal's quest for a title in his French debut.

But the immensely talented, if sometimes tempestuous 6-foot-4 Safin should not be overlooked as he tries to add the French title to the Australian he won in January when he beat Federer in the semis and Lleyton Hewitt in the final, and the US Open he won in 2000 when he downed Pete Sampras in a straight-sets final.

Reigning US Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova, posted a 6-1, 2-6, 6-0 victory over American Marissa Irvin. Top-ranked Lindsay Davenport is the only remaining American, male or female, among the 22 who entered the tournament.

No. 2 Maria Sharapova, trying to overtake Davenport for the No. 1 ranking and win the French for the first time, beat fellow 18-year-old Russian Anna Chakvetadze, 6-1, 6-4. Two other Russian women also advanced—No. 7 Nadia Petrova and No. 12 Elena Bovina. Sharapova will next play unseeded Nuria Llagostera Vives, who upset No. 13 Nathalie Dechy of France, 7-6 (1), 6-3.

Safin and Ferrero have known each other since they were 14, practicing together at times, then playing against each other in the juniors. As pros, they've now split 10 matches. Each has been No. 1 in the rankings briefly and each has had ups and downs because of injuries and illnesses. *AP*

Mauresmo, French gals falter at Roland Garros

MAURESMO: Foiled at home anew REUTERS

PARIS—Amelie Mauresmo saw her French Open hopes go up in flames once again Saturday on a bad day for the home fans.

Mauresmo lost, 4-6, 6-3, 4-6, to 17-year-old Serb, Ana Ivanovic, in a center court stunner as three other French women were sent packing from the third round.

Mauresmo was making her 11th straight appearance at the French Open, the tournament she most wants to win and once again her center court nerves got the better of her.

She had beaten Ivanovic three times already this year, but each time it had been harder and she had been expecting a real battle in French prime time after cruising through her first two rounds.

The Serbian set the tone of the tie by breaking the Mauresmo serve in the opening game and it was a battle all the way after that for the French third seed.

Twice Ivanovic looked like putting the match away firstly at one set and 3-1 up in the second and then at 3-1 up in the third.

But urged on by a packed and partisan crowd, Mauresmo dug deep to keep her hopes alive.

She looked like pulling it off when Ivanovic needed brief medical treatment at 4-3 up in the decider but Mauresmo promptly had another wobble and double-faulted on match point to make yet another early exit.

"I had problems breathing and I felt weak and dizzy," said Ivanovic of her troubles.

Mauresmo paid tribute to her opponent.

"There was a fight, there was a match and she is the one who made it through," said Mauresmo. "I knew she would be a tough opponent as she has improved so much over the last few months."

Earlier in the day, her compatriots Tatania Golovin, Emilie Loit and Nathalie Dechy all lost, leaving 2000 winner Mary Pierce as the sole survivor from the home camp.

Ranged against Pierce in the last 16 will be six Russians.

The Russians dominated for the first time at Roland Garros last year when Anastasia Myskina became the first Grand Slam winner from her country, defeating Elena Dementieva in the final.

Myskina was a first-round casualty this year, but Dementieva is back again going through on Friday with Elena Likhovtseva.

Joining them on Saturday were Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova and US Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova as well as Nadia Petrova and Elena Bovina.

While the Russians have been on a surge, traditional rival America has slumped with only top seed Lindsay Davenport still surviving into the fourth round from 12 who lined up in the main draw.

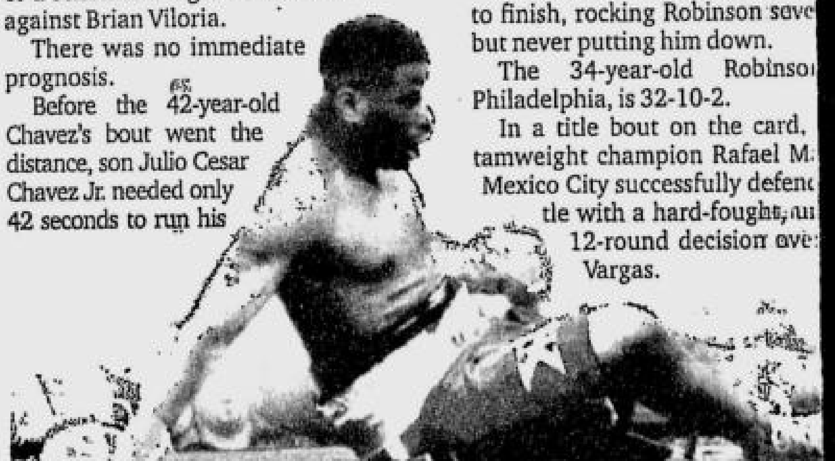
As usual all eyes were on glamour girl Sharapova, who is striving to adapt her go-for-bust game to the requirements of clay.

"I think I am playing a lot better than last year, I still need to be more patient and realize that I can't go for winners quickly. Some balls are not too comfortable to go for, sometimes I hit it too flat," she said.

Belgium's Justine Henin-Hardenne also went through hitting back from a nightmare start, in which she lost the opening five games before steadying the ship to see off the gutsy challenge of Spain's Anabel Medina Garrigues in three sets, 4-6, 6-2, 6-3.

But it was a far from convincing performance from the 2003 champion here who continues to struggle with her form and fitness. *AFP*

Chavez wins final c



MEXICAN boxing star Julio Cesar Chavez (right) stands over Ivan Robinson a

LOS ANGELES—Mexico's Julio Cesar Chavez took a unanimous 10-round decision Saturday over Ivan Robinson in a welterweight bout billed as Chavez's "Adios" to Los Angeles.

The evening of boxing at Staples Center was marred by a serious injury in an early bout on the undercard.

Mexican flyweight Ruben Contreras underwent surgery Saturday night to relieve pressure from bleeding on his brain. Contreras suffered a seizure shortly after he quit during his bout, ringside physician Paul Wallace said.

The 32-year-old Contreras was taken to California Hospital Medical Center after he stopped fighting in the sixth round of a scheduled eight-round bout against Brian Viloria.

There was no immediate prognosis.

Before the 42-year-old Chavez's bout went the distance, son Julio Cesar Chavez Jr. needed only 42 seconds to run his record to 19-0.

The lanky 19-year-old stagger
Wynant with a left hook soon
opening bell of their scheduled
lightweight bout, landed anothe
left a few seconds later, then con
ed with several quick combinati

The dazed Wynant stagge
across the ring and fell, and ref
Jack Reiss stopped it.

The knockout was the 14th f
by-faced Chavez, who is
Wynant is from Indianapolis and
to 9-4-1.

The elder Chavez, fighting for
time and winding down his stor
ran his record to 107-5-2, with 88 k

Chavez dominated the bout
to finish, rocking Robinson seve
but never putting him down.

The 34-year-old Robinson
Philadelphia, is 32-10-2.

In a title bout on the card,
tamweight champion Rafael M
Mexico City successfully defen
tle with a hard-fought,
12-round decision ove
Vargas.

STAGE 4 RESULTS

INDIVIDUAL

1. L. Atilano, Metro Drug, 3 hours 8 minutes 37 seconds
2. E. Atilano, Metro Drug, same
3. C. Jasul, Colt 45, 1 minute 39 seconds behind
4. J. Dasalla, Colt 45, 1:43 mins behind
5. E. Obosa, Go 21, 1:48 mins
6. O. Villanueva, VAT Riders, same
7. N. Estayo, Touch Mobile, same
8. R. Hualda, Tourism, same
9. O. Rendole, Tourism, same
10. E. Domingo, Guerrero Brandy, same
11. J. Tolentino, Guerrero Brandy, same
12. R. Martin, VAT Riders, same
13. E. Pablo, VAT Riders, same
14. A. Asuncion, Tourism, same
15. R. Navarro, Custom, same
16. B. Ravina, Go 21, same
17. R. Sambrano, Guerrero Brandy, same
18. F. Alagano, Metro Drug, same
19. D. Ganigan, Guerrero Brandy, same
20. J. Paras, Go 21, same
21. D. Marana, Colt 45, same
22. G. Bergonio, Touch Mobile, same
23. S. Diamsay, Tourism, same
24. R. Acosta, Go 21, same
25. J. Ricafort, Touch Mobile, 2:15 mins behind

OVERALL INDIVIDUAL

1. W. Davadilla, Colt 45, 10 hours 24 minutes 55 seconds
2. R. Tangulilg, PLDT, 2 minutes 25 seconds behind
3. A. Benosa, Touch Mobile, 3:30 mins
4. S. Barnachea, Touch Mobile, 5:11
5. F. Alagano, Metro Drug, 6:19
6. M. McQuin Aleonar, VAT Riders, 6:39
7. B. Lopez Jr., Metro Drug, 6:57
8. A. Quirimit, Tourism, 7:09
9. R. Navarro, Custom, 7:25
10. T. Diamsay, Tourism, 7:44
11. E. Quinones, Custom, 7:50
12. D. Ganigan, Guerrero Brandy, 8:24
13. L. Atilano, Metro Drug, 8:39
14. M. Primero, Custom, 8:49
15. B. Ravina, Go 21, 9:57
16. J. Dasalla, Colt 45, 10:06
17. V. Muena, Guerrero Brandy, 10:09
18. E. Feliciano, VAT Riders, 10:11
19. E. Obosa, Go 21, 10:39
20. J. Garlilo, Tourism, 10:49
21. R. Sambrano, Guerrero Brandy, 11:24
22. O. Rendole, Tourism, 11:25
23. R. Villaver, PLDT, 11:40
24. D. Perez, Colt 45, 11:45
25. J. Ricafort, Touch Mobile, 11:47

OVERALL TEAM STANDINGS

1. Metro Drug, 37 hours 39 minutes 17.258 seconds
2. Colt 45, 3 mins 19.048 secs behind
3. Guerrero Brandy, 5:41.060 mins
4. Tourism, 7:05.861 mins
5. Custom, 9:10.042 mins
6. Touch Mobile, 9:55.030 mins
7. PLDT, 10:44.315 mins
8. VAT Riders, 11:06.503 mins
9. Go 21, 12:45.241 mins

Japan, Taiwan gain Asi

Games Today
10 a.m.—Vietnam vs Thailand
3 p.m.—Japan vs Chinese Taipei

JAPAN and Chinese-Taipei eked out tough victories over their respective rivals to barge into the semifinals of the fifth Asian Girls Under-18 Volleyball Championships at the Mandaue Sports Complex in Mandaue City yesterday.

The Japanese, who swept their elimination-round assignment in Pool A, needed to toughen up on defense in the deciding frame to pull off a scary 25-23, 25-16, 24-26, 18-25, 15-11, victory over the
Vietnamese in their quarterfinal m

That set them up to a semis cla
Taiwanese, who battled back from
loss to beat Thailand, 22-25, 25-
25-17.

China, the most fancied team
is expected to join them in the
semis of this tournament sanction
Asian Volleyball Federation and
by the Philippine Volleyball Fed
they play host Philippines late Sun

Australia and Korea were disp
other semis berth at presstime wi

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History beckons female ndianapolis 500 driver

IANAPOLIS, Indiana—There been three female drivers in history of the 89th Indianapo- 500, but 23-year-old rookie ica Patrick is the first with a timate chance of winning.

There is nothing I want to do e than to win this race," said ick. "I will do what it takes. I ex- to win this race if I and the team get everything right."

Patrick is the lightest driver in the Indy Racing League, but she will be carrying the weight of history on her shoulders in Sunday's race at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

There have been three other female drivers who have preceded Patrick at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, beginning with pioneer Janet Guthrie from 1977-79.

At the time, she was unwelcome by fellow drivers and her best finish was ninth in 1978.

Lyn St. James competed in seven Indy 500s from 1992-97 and returned in 2000. Her best finish was 11th in her rookie season.

Sarah Fisher ran in five Indy 500s, but her best result was 21st last year.

Patrick has been the fastest driver all month at the 2 1/2-mile oval, but she has never competed in a race over 300 miles. A bobble on her first lap in qualifications cost her the pole on May 15.

The dark-haired beauty rebounded on her final three laps to start fourth on the grid with a four-lap average of 227.004 miles per hour in a Panoz/Honda.

She ran the fastest lap in practice earlier that day at 229.880 mph.

While Fisher tried hard to be "one of the guys," Patrick doesn't worry about that.

"This could be twisted any kind of way, but I came here to drive, and I just want to be Danica," she said. *AFP*

NICA Patrick tries to change the way the wheel turns in the Indy 500.

lonso tops European GP

RBURGRING—Renault driver nando Alonso won a thrilling pean Grand Prix here Sun- when leader Kimi Raikkonen hed out on the final lap when McLaren failed spectacularly.

aikkonen looked set for victory e struggled with an ill-handling n the closing stages after both nd Alonso made mistakes and ed their tires during the race.

But the Finn, who took the lead from pole man Nick Heidfeld at the start, suffered a disastrous blow to his championship hopes when the suspension collapsed and he crashed out with less than one lap to go.

Cooler weather than seen over the rest of the weekend, with temperatures around six degrees below the high of 31 degrees Celsius seen on Saturday, failed to prevent the teams struggling for grip.

But although Alonso also suffered problems with his tires it was Raikkonen's McLaren that gave up before the end to hand the Spaniard his fifth victory and a 32-point lead in the championship race.

Heidfeld came home second to post his third podium finish. *AFP*

eonard takes 8-shot lead

MPHIS, Tennessee—Justin nard shot a 4-under 66 on rday in the St. Jude Classic to nd his lead to eight strokes, argest 54-hole advantage on JS PGA Tour this year.

he largest 54-hole lead pre- sly on tour had been seven kes by Phil Mickelson at ble Beach and last week by ny Perry at Colonial. Both t on to win. In fact, 21 ers have held a seven-stroke lead and won on tour since 1970.

Leonard, who began the third round with a five-stroke lead, had four birdies in his bogey-free round to reach 17-under 193.

Now the Texan, who won the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic in January for his ninth tour title, only has to avoid hurting himself to join Tiger Woods, Vijay Singh, Mickelson and Perry as multiple winners on the tour this year.

In Corning, New York, France's Karine Icher shot a bogey-free 4-under 68 on Saturday and maintained a one-stroke lead after three rounds of the LPGA Corning Classic on a cool, rainy day.

Icher, who began the round with a one-shot lead over Annika Sorenstam and Sherri Turner, finished with a 12-under 204, just ahead of Korean Han Hee-won, who shot a career-best 62. *AP*

areer match

ed Adam after the ix-round r looping nect- ns. red ree

r the ba- -foot-11. dropped

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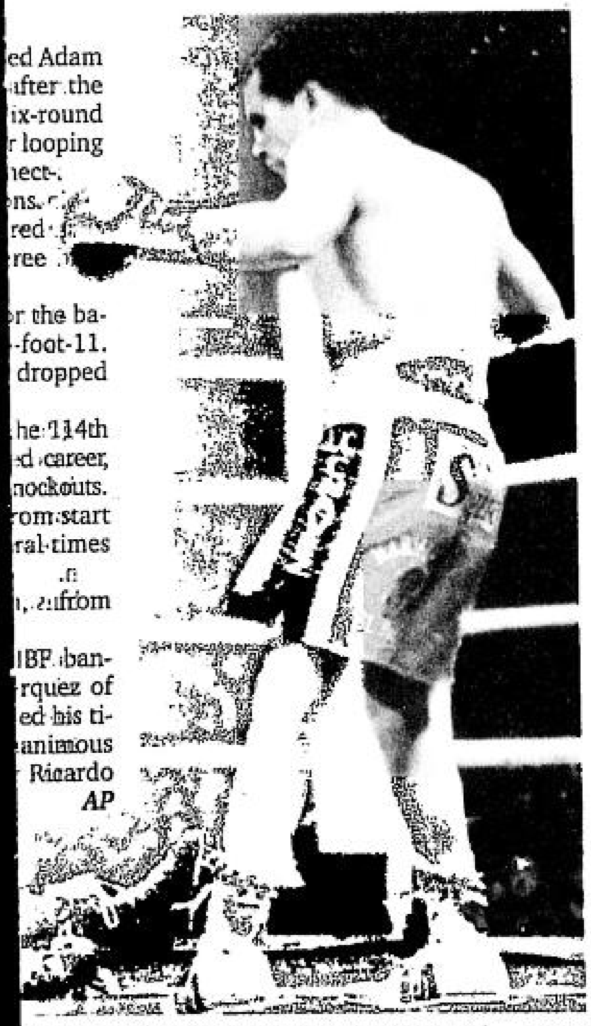
IBF ban- rquez of ed his ti- animous Ricardo *AP*



fter knocking him down in the fourth round. REUTERS

V-LEAGUE

Lady Archers seek No. 5 vs Tigresses

ARCH rivals La Salle and Santo Tomas clash in what could be another classic encounter in the 2005 Shakey's V-League first conference today at the Rizal Coliseum.

STANDINGS	W	L
La Salle	4	0
SSC	4	1
Ateneo	3	2
UST	2	2
FEU	1	4
Lyceum	0	5

Games today
(Rizal Coliseum)
3 p.m.—Ateneo vs Lyceum
5 p.m.—La Salle vs UST

Although the Lady Archers are two games ahead of the defending champions, odds are just about even in their 5 p.m. encounter with the Tigresses, who are slowly rounding up to form after a so-so start.

The Lady Archers brought down the erstwhile front-running San Sebastian spikers in a surprisingly lopsided 25-23, 25-18, 25-20 win last Saturday as the 2004 second conference champions seized the overall lead with a 4-0 (win-loss) mark.

La Salle will again pin its hopes on Maureen Penetrante and Michelle Carolino, who will be opposed by the UST tandem of Roxanne Pimentel and Mary Jean Balse up front.

Pimentel and Balse, however, need to draw support from their teammates if they want to improve on the Tigresses' 2-2 card that included losses to the Lady Stags and the Ateneo Lady Eagles in the event backed by Accel, Mikasa, IBC 13 and Jemah Television.

Meanwhile, Ateneo aims to keep solo third spot when it collides with winless Lyceum College at 3 p.m.

Backstopped by Michelle Laborte, Amelia Guanco and Cecille Tabuena, the Lady Eagles edged the upset-conscious Lady Tamaraws, 28-30, 25-20, 25-21, 28-26, to seize the No. 3 spot with a 3-2 record.

The Lady Pirates had a woeful 0-5 record, including a heartbreaking 23-25, 25-14, 14-25, 25-17, 12-15 setback to the Morayta-based netters last week.

an volley semis

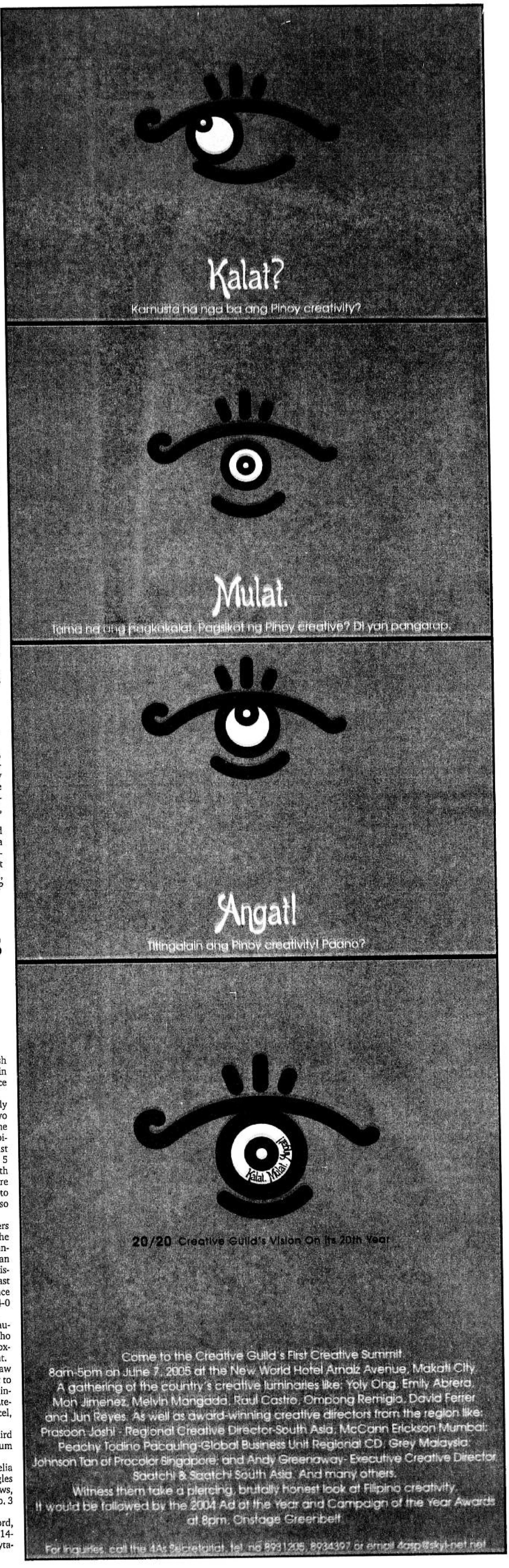
stubborn tchup. with the n first-set 6, 25-22,

the fold, rossover ed by the rganized ration as lay. uting the the winner facing China in the next round.

Despite fielding only seven players in the semis, Vietnam fought back from a two-set deficit only to lose the momentum in the fifth set.

Wu Su Fen took charge for Chinese Taipei, scoring 17 points, including two aces while Nonyaso Jiraporn and Mahaon Yaowwarak had 15 each for Thailand.

Wu and the rest of the Chinese Taipei squad will be aiming to avenge their five-set loss to Japan in their opening match last Tuesday where they were two sets to one ahead before losing the fourth and fifth sets.



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For inquiries, call the 4As Secretariat, tel. no 8931205, 8934397 or email 4asp@skyinet.net

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	4 LA VISA LOCA	5 HOUSE OF WAX	6 MADAGASCAR	7 UNLEASHED
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 UNLEASHED 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35,9:45	2 STAR WARS EP. 3 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX MADAGASCAR 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX STAR WARS EP. 3 2:00, 4:50 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 UNLEASHED 2:35, 4:45, 6:55,9:05, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 HOUSE OF WAX 12:15, 2:30, 4:45, 7:00, 9:15, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 STAR WARS EP. 3 12:10, 3:00, 5:50, 8:40, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX STAR WARS EP. 3	2 MADAGASCAR		
	3 UNLEASHED	4 HOUSE OF WAX	5 STAR WARS EP. 3	
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	1 STAR WARS EP. 3	2 MADAGASCAR	3 UNLEASHED	4 LA VISA LOKA

Experience Spring at Greenbelt

French Spring Festival

June 2	10th French Film Festival Opening (Greenbelt 3 cinema lobby) 7:30pm
June 3 - 15	10th French Film Festival regular run (Greenbelt 1 Artfilm)
June 2 - 19	Paris Oil Color Exhibit (Greenbelt 3 cinema lobby)
June 6	Indios Bravos Dance Performance (Greenbelt 1, Onstage) 8:30pm
June 11 & 12	Passage des Embobas Street Theater (Greenbelt 3) 2pm and 8pm
June 13 - 30	The Man Who Planted Trees Art Exhibit (Glorietta Artspace)
June 14	Indoor Circus by Camille Boitel (Greenbelt 1, Onstage) 8:00pm
June 17 - 19	10th French Film Festival regular run (Ayala Center Cebu)
June 18	Fete de la Musique (Greenbelt 3)

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⑦ Starwars Episode III

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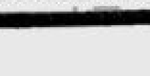


P100
Powercard

HOPE P1-M BILLIARDS

Bustamante, Pagulayan clash for title

DEFENDING champion Francisco "Django" Bustamante and reigning world pool titlist Alex Pagulayan will again dispute the championship in the Hope P1-Million All-Filipino Billiards Challenge II at the LS-2 Studio of IBC 13 in Quezon City.

Bustamante brought down Efren "Bata" Reyes, 11-6, while Pagulayan nosed out Lee Van Corteza, 11-7, in the semifinals late Saturday night to set up another showdown in the prestigious event being sponsored by Hope in cooperation with Puyat Sports and Jemah Television.

In their previous title clash, Bustamante rallied to beat Pagulayan, 15-13.

Pagulayan, however, exacted revenge over Bustamante, 9-3, in their quarterfinal meeting in the double-elimination tournament late Friday night.

"It will be an interesting showdown once again," said Bustamante, who is hoping to add another to his vast title collection and pocket the top prize of P500,000 put up by Hope.

The runner-up will bring home P200,000.

Bustamante had a surprisingly easy time ousting Reyes. He took the first two racks and after exchanging run outs, cleaned up the next two for a commanding 6-2 lead.

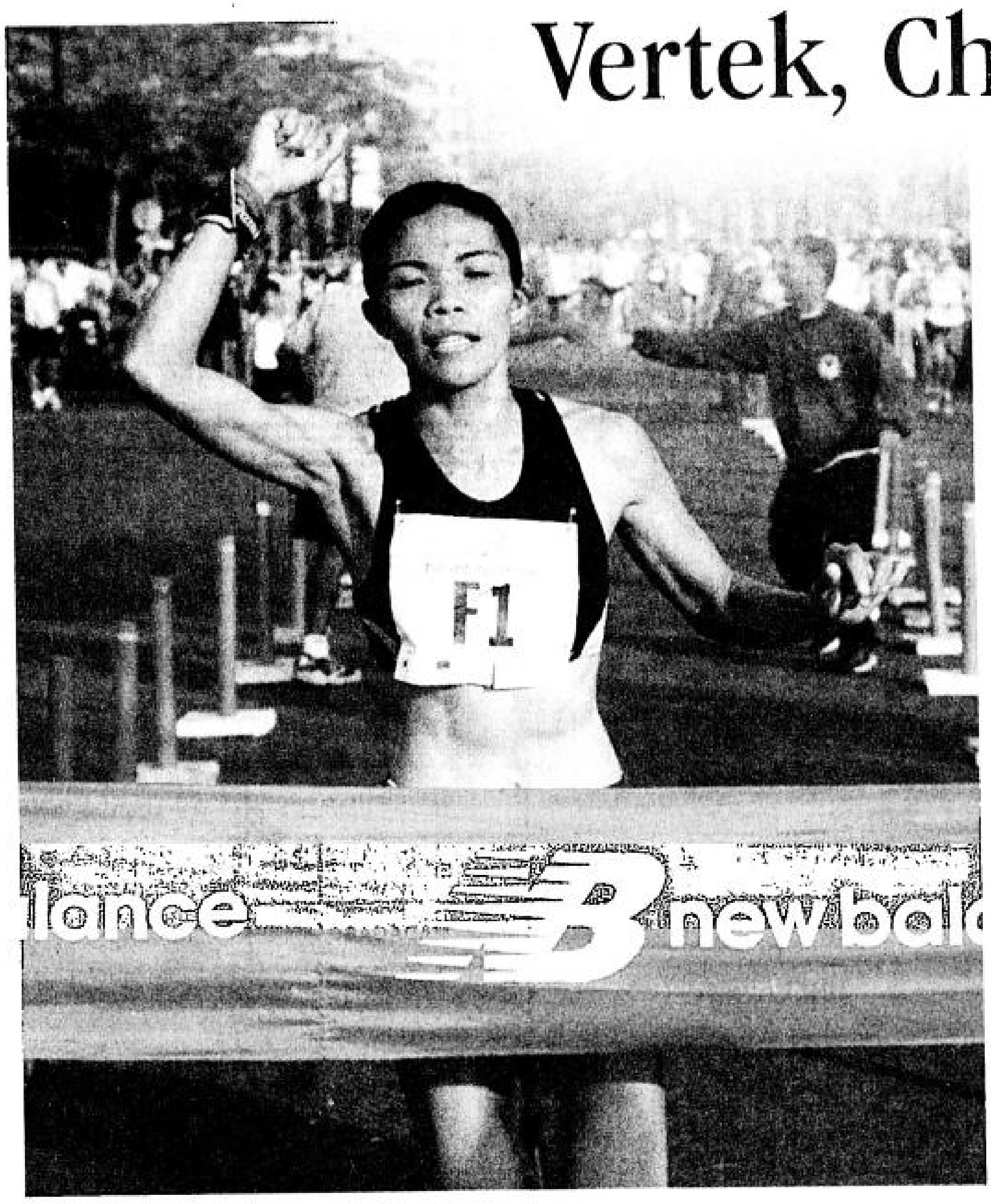
Pagulayan, on the other hand, had a difficult time against Corteza.

The 26-year-old Filipino-Canadian fell 0-5 and trailed 2-7 before closing the match with nine straight winners.

Pagulayan scored his first run out on his sixth break to come within 5-7—a far cry from his performance against Bustamante where he ran out all his six serves.

After reaching the hill on the 17th, Pagulayan completed his second run out to close the match.

Vertek, Christabel cruise to victories


CHRISTABEL Martes crosses the finish line by her lonesome.
JOSEPH AGCAOILI

FAVORITES Eduardo "Vertek" Buenavista and Christabel Martes strolled to victories in the 2005 New Balance Power Race yesterday, ruling their respective divisions in the centerpiece 25K event for the second straight year at the Fort Bonifacio Global City.

The 27-year-old Buenavista, the diminutive runner from South Cotabato, broke away from the pack in the first three kilometers and went on to cross the finish line by his lonesome.

He checked in at 1:19.25, four minutes faster than the 1:23.31 clocking he posted in winning the event last year. The 2002 Milo Marathon champion won P25,000 on top of gift packs from the sponsoring New Balance, Pepsi X and Power Bar.

That's the same prize package Martes brought home as the 25-year-old Benguet native outclassed her rivals in the distaff side, winning in 1:32.17, five minutes better than her last year's clocking and 13 minutes ahead of eventual second placer Liza Yambao, who had a 1:45.27.

"I'm in good shape so I broke away after the first three kilometers," said Buenavista, who shrugged off a foot injury he sustained in a recent half-marathon in Korea, in Filipino.

As Buenavista peeled off a huge pack that answered the starting gun at the break of dawn, nobody was able to keep pace with the Southeast Asian Games gold medalist in the 5,000m (Malaysia) and 10,000m (Vietnam).

Cresencio Sabal did try but reeled back just the same, settling for second in 1:23.25 while Rio dela Cruz clocked 1:25.45 to finish third.

Close to 4,000 runners, from a bubbly 8-year-old aspirant to an 80-year-old veteran campaigner, took part in the event.

JOSEPH AGCAOILI
EDUARDO Buenavista rules the men's division at the expense of 2nd placer Cresenciano Sabal (left) and 3rd placer Rio Dela Cruz.

De los Santos, Aldanete head nat'l lift winners

CEBU CITY—SEA Games veterans Alvin de los Santos and Alfonsito Aldanete topped their respective divisions last night to lead the winners in the 2005 National 5-in-1 Weightlifting Championships at the Baseline Restaurant and Recreation Center here.

De los Santos, bronze medalist in Vietnam two years ago, ruled the Open +105 kg category with 140 kg snatch, 170 kg clean and jerk for a total of 310 kg while Aldanete, a bronze medalist in the 1997 Jakarta Games, dominated the 85 kg category when he lifted 120 kg in snatch, 160 kg in clean and jerk for a total of 280 kg.

Other winners in the Open division were Renante Briones (105 kg), Ronald Colonia (94 kg) and Ellie Perez (77 kg). In the collegiate division, Ray Jeferson Querobin won the +105 kg class.

What's the latest on super horse Wind Blown?

CLEAN LIVING

Manolo R. Iñigo

IN LATE 2003, multi-awarded Wind Blown was retired to stud at the Herma Farms and Stud in Lipa City, Batangas, a province widely known as the hub of horse breeding in the Philippines.

Today, following his first season as a sire in 2004, the country's most accomplished racehorse has already sired 20 offspring that will be of racing age as 2-year-olds in 2007.

What then is in store for these Wind Blown progenies?

If I remember correctly, a lucrative incentive program was launched in February 2004 at the Manila Polo Club that could guarantee more than P8 million in prizes to the super horse's future progenies.

Called the "Pioneer-Wind Blown Bonus Incentive Program," the first ever program in Philippine racing history was forged between Pioneer Insurance, represented by its president and chief executive officer David Coyukiat, and Wind Blown owner Hermie Esguerra in cooperation with the Philippine Racing Commission chaired by Jaime Dilag, the Metropolitan Association of Race Horse Owners led by its president Aristeo "Putch" Puyat and the Philippine Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Organization represented by its chair Ambassador Antonio Lagdameo.

Pioneer Insurance, the market leader in general and life insurance as well as customized coverage, has earmarked no less than P8.8 million in bonus prizes for the "Pioneer-Wind Blown Incentive Program," making it the single biggest corporate sponsorship commitment in Philippine horse racing.

The bonus prizes will be given during the Philracom, Marho and Philtobo stakes races for 2-year-olds in 2007 and 3-year-olds in 2008. These races are the Philracom Juvenile Open Championship, the Marho Breeders' Cup Juvenile Colts and Fillies, the Philtobo Mitra Cup Juvenile Colts and Fillies in 2007 and the Philracom Triple Crown series in 2008. As part of the sponsorship agreement, the guaranteed winner's prizes in all these races will be matched by Pioneer Insurance if the winners are first crop progenies of Wind Blown.

The biggest bonus prize for a 2-year-old Wind Blown progeny will come from a victory in the Philracom Juvenile Open Championship.

Because Pioneer will match the Philracom's P1-million guaranteed prize, it means that the winner's paycheck will be a whopping P2 million.

On the other hand, a first crop Wind Blown offspring that wins any of the three legs of the 2008 Philracom Triple Crown series will be entitled to a 1-million bonus prize for each leg victory while an additional P3 million bonus payoff for a sweep of the three Triple Crown legs can earn a record P6 million in total bonus prizes for the champion Wind Blown progeny.

"This (incentive) program is a recognition of a common desire to promote and pursue the objective of producing a future champion horse from the progenies of Wind Blown," Pioneer chief Coyukiat had said in an interview.

Wind Blown, then 6 years old, ended his racing career in November 2003 by winning for the third year in a row the Marho Breeders' Cup Classic at the Santa Ana Park. When he retired, Wind Blown held a phenomenal record of 36 victories (24 in stakes races) in 49 starts, earning an all-time high of P18,978,695.50 in total winnings.

Foaled in 1997 at Sandy Javier's Royal Maverick Farm in Rosario, Batangas, Wind Blown (Hazm-Wind in my Hair by Cox's Ridge) didn't look like a winner at first, being too lanky and very disproportionate.

But in 2000 at the age of three, he started to make the racing aficionados sit up and cheer when he won 11 races in 16 starts, including four stakes races, namely, the third leg of the Triple Crown, the Grand Futurity at Santa Ana, the SMB-Marho Breeders' Cup for 3-year-old colts and the PCSO Presidential Gold Cup.

In 2001, Hermie Esguerra, a true-blue sportsman and already a successful businessman from Bulacan, acquired then 4-year-old Wind Blown to add to his growing stable of horses. Wind Blown did not fail his new owner as he went on to win nine of 10 races, making him the unanimous choice as Horse of the Year by the Philippine Sportswriters Association, the Philippine Racing Commission and the Philippine Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders Organization.

The great Wind Blown preserved that winning streak at the age of five in 2002 and continued that fine tradition until he was retired at the age of six in 2003.

In a fitting tribute to a champion horse, thousands of racing fans attended a farewell race in honor of the retiring Wind Blown last Dec. 7, 2003 at the Santa Ana Park.

"I owe it to the fans, my fellow breeders and horse owners and racing officials to host this memorable day because these are the people who made things happen for Wind Blown," said Esguerra of his famous horse.

Wind Blown's sire line is the highly successful Danzig-Northern Daneer-Phalaris line. Danzig has produced 141 stakes winners from 418 runners that earned $77.6 million. The female family of Wind Blown is also very successful, with champion dam Cold Hearted producing several stakes winners in the United States such as Baltic, Chill, Tranquility Lake and Caveat, a Kentucky Derby winner. No wonder racing fans are now eagerly awaiting for the first batch of Wind Blown's juvenile colts and fillies to strut their wares in 2007.

SPORTSWATCH

Coseteng renews rivalry with Pastors

DEFENDING champion Jody Coseteng of San Miguel Beer looks forward to another showdown with the Pastor brothers—Enzo and Don—as the 2005 Petron National Touring Car Championship stages its second leg this weekend, June 4-5, at the Batangas Racing Circuit. Coseteng narrowly escaped from the encounter with the Pastors in the kickoff leg. But he'll try to avoid getting tangled up with them as he looks for a sweep of Rounds 3 and 4 of the series sanctioned by the Automobile Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Petron Ultron, Toyota Motors Phils., Norkis Yamaha, Kilton Motors, Denso, MOF Company and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. Coseteng is eyeing his fourth straight crown. Also entered are Philip Alvendia, Oscar and Christian Aguilar of Caltex Havoline, Dominic Bon, Francis Godinez and Peewee Mendiola.

LAWN BOWLERS: Ronalyn Greennlees, president of the Philippine Lawn Bowls Association and silver medalist in the 2001 Malaysia SEA Games, leads the RP lawn bowlers' daily training sessions for the SEAG under the sponsorship of San Miguel Corp. and Super Dry Beer. Helping in the team preparations is Chito Loyzaga (second from right), project director for SMC's sponsorship of the RP lawn bowls team training at the Greenfield Resort in Angeles City.

McDonald House Charities tournament

THE 9TH Annual Ronald McDonald House Charities Golf Tournament was held recently at the Sta. Elena Golf Club. RMHC chair George T. Yang and wunderkind Miguel Tabuena did the ceremonial tee-off. Three generations of Yangs competed, Mr. Yang; RMHC president Kenneth Yang and Kevin Yang, Kenneth's son. Class A champion is Team McCormick composed of James Chuaunsu, Sammy Sy, Zebe Roxas Chua; Class B champion, Havi Phils. Team Roosters—Jose Nepomuceno, Roberto Kanapi, Desi Tomacruz; Class C champion, ABC 5, Pierre Paul Buhay, Rino Basilio, Dick Ildefonso while overall champion is Globe Telecom, composed of Dennis Roque, Blums Pineda and James Ileto.

'Summer Heat' at Roligon today

ALL roads lead to the Roligon Mega Cockpit today as the "Summer Heat 4-Cock Derby" second round eliminations get underway at 5 p.m. featuring 68 fights. A total of 169 entries were registered in this event being hosted by Roligon owner Rolly Ligon, who put up a guaranteed prize of P1.2 million. As bonus, the fastest win champion will drive home an imported Toyota Hi-Lux Diesel. Ligon reminded provincial participants to come on time for the finals on Wednesday. About 40 participants will field straight four cocks on Wednesday. So far, 16 cockers were able score two wins each. Meanwhile, the annual "Hatawan Sa Tag-Ulan 6-Cock Derby" is set on July 4, 6, 8, 11 and 13, with P3 million and a five-door Pajero up for grabs. Entry fee is P8,800. For reservation of cockhouses, contact 833-2275, 833-1638 and 852-9812

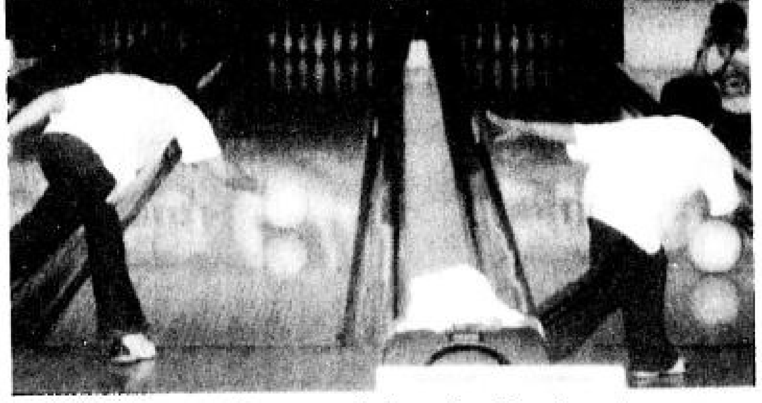
Vivas, Castillo prevail in JVC Jrs badminton

PAUL Vivas of Bulacan/Team Valencia and Centro Athletico's Gelita Castillo crowned themselves the 14-under champions in the JVC Badminton Open Juniors Championships when they overwhelmed their rivals in the finals at SM Megamall yesterday.

Vivas mastered JP Babad of Battledore with his superb all-around game, 15-8, 15-2, to cop the boys' singles crown while Castillo likewise came away with a straight-set 11-8, 11-4 victory over Danica Bolos of Santiago City Badminton Center to bag the girls' diadem in the event sponsored by JVC (Phils.), Inc. and SM Supermalls.

Those victories netted Vivas and Castillo gold medals plus combined prizes worth P300,000, including college education plans from Pioneer Life, Gosen rackets, Epson printers and JVC portable discman.

Bianca Legaspi and Abigail Garcia won the ladies doubles.


FUTURE CHAMPS: The country's future bowling champions may come from this year's batch of students who have enrolled in Milo's summer sports program where tenpin bowling is included.

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SPORTS

FOUNDERS' CUP

Empire King exacts revenge on Cover Girl

By Edwin Villanueva, *Contributor*

EMPIRE KING is boss at San Lazaro.

EMPIRE King got back at archrival Cover Girl but not with the help of the regular jockey who used to steer him in big-time races.

The 2004 Horse of the Year didn't miss Jeffrey Ladiana as veteran Antonio Alcasid Jr. gave him an equally brilliant victory in the 31st Marho Founders' Cup yesterday at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

Alcasid's strong handling brought the best out of Empire King who withstood Cover Girl's down-the-wire charge to prevail by half a length in the 1,600-meter race.

"I knew I was riding a champion horse, so I did all the best that I could," said Alcasid, the third jockey to sub for Ladiana on board Empire King.

The 4-year-old chestnut colt by Perfect Halo out of Carta Nueve picked up the P300,000 first prize in the event staged by the Metropolitan Association of Race Horse Owners led by its president Aristeo "Putch" Puyat and chair Sandy Javier, also the breeder of the winning horse.

Cover Girl, handled by Jonathan Hernandez, challenged Empire King going to the home turn but when the whips came out, it was Alcasid who outshone Hernandez.

Empire King, running along the rail, seemed on the verge of crumbling anew, as when he lost in the First Gentleman Silver Cup aboard Ladiana, but he came alive again when Alcasid flogged him twice a few meters to the payoff line.

That was all Empire King needed as Hernandez tried in vain to score again with Cover Girl, who settled for the second prize of P112,500.

West Bound, Cover Girl's coupled bet, finished third, three lengths off the winner, while Aussie import Stowaway Lass, who was never in contention, arrived fourth, her three-race winning romp snapped.

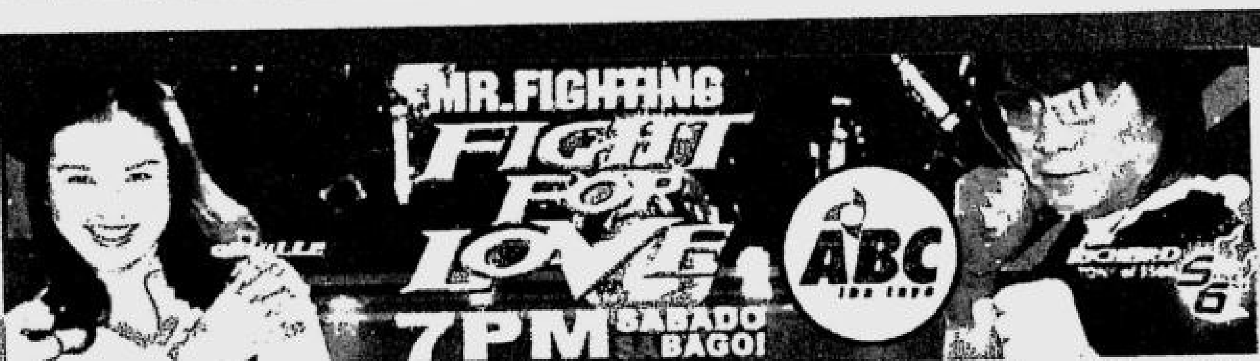
Completing the order of finish in the race, held in honor of Marho's founding chair and president Eduardo Cojuangco Jr., were American Woman and Free Wind.

The only other jockeys who have ridden Empire King were Hernandez and Pat Dilema, who proved unsuccessful.

Empire King, now with 15 wins in 25 starts, covered the muddy race in a fast 1:39.5 (24.5-24.5-24-26).

Alcasid tried to hustle Empire King in front when the gates opened but gave way to American Woman and Free Wind, settling his mount to fourth by the rail as West Bound claimed third.

West Bound surged ahead nearing the far turn but Empire King dispatched him with ease just as Cover Girl began to dig in.



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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE Monday May 30 2005

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4.25PM)	Yu-Gi-Oh! (5:10PM)	Meteor Garden Full Edition (5.35PM)		TV Patrol World		Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Hiram	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Memories Of Bali	Stained Glass	OK Fine! Whatever			Insider
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	EZ Shop	Anime Ring Kasho				Sentro	Friends	The Apprentice		Fear Factor		Big News	Pops!		Billboard On-Air	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Flame Of Recca	Full House		24 Oras		Darna		Encantadia	Extra Challenge		All About Eve	Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberrys	Sponge Bob	The Insider	NBA On RPN					Biggest Loser		Newswatch Now	Sex & the City	Cerge For Truth	
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		Home Shopping Network		Trinidad-Wright Wr Undercard					IBC News Tonite	Linawin Natin	
JackTV	Street Smarts	Worst Case Scenario		Wwe Heat		WWE Velocity		Cheat	Just For Laughs	Mad TV		Kid Notorious	Comedy Central Presents	Insomniac W/ Dave Attell	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Blue Collar TV	Banzai	Joe Schmo Show	
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Of Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
MYX		Urban MYX		Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Take 5	My MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Mellow MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	OPM MYX Countdown		My MYX	MYX Backtrax	OPM MYX	Mellow MYX
ETC		Complete Savages	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	Friends	Will & Grace	The O.C.		Queer eye For The Straight Guy		Entertainment Tonight Weekend		Who Wants To Marry My Dad 2	
Cinema One		Trip Kita, Type Mo Ba?				Sana Dalawa Ang Puso Ko				All My Life				Marka				Dilinger ng Dose Pares	
Studio 23		Urban MYX	Rock MYX	Pop MYX	OPM MYX	Super Gals	My MYX	Ragnarok	Project Arms	Wazzup Wazzup	Fightbox	Tru Calling		Charmed		News Central	The West Wing		Travel Time
AXN		Lost		The Contender		Gensomaden Saiyuki	Gensomaden Saiyuki	Pensacola (Season III)		Boomtown		Fear Factor (Season V)		The Contender		CSI: Miami (Season II)		CSI: Miami (Season II)	
Star World	Weird TV	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	The King Of Queens	Still Standing	Grounded For Life/ Yes Dear	Frasier	Boston Public		Friends	The King Of Queens
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News	Living Golf	World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Built For The Kill		Totally Wild	Wildlife Diary	Be The Creature		Egypt Detectives: Mystery Of The First Egyptians	Africa From The Ground Up	Wow		About Asia		National Geographic Specials/When Animals Attack		Built For The Kill		Totally Wild/Animals Like Us,Politics/Medicine/Adoption/Tool Use	Wildlife Diary
Solar Sports		Women's Volleyball '04				WTA '05 Pacific Life Open QFinals/SFinals				Sagupaan		NBA Jam L925	Sports Desk	NBA Eastern Conf Finals Game3					NBA Action
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Food 911	El True Hollywood Story		NY Fashion Week	Life & Style		Brini Maxwell Show	Modern Girl's Guide	Breathing Room	Genuine Article
HBO		Lone Star (3.05PM)				The Mirror Has Two Faces (5.15 PM)					Once Upon A Time In Mexico (7.20 PM)			Escape From L.A.			Willard (10.40PM)	Hope Springs (11.05PM)	
Star Movies		Assassination Tango				Unstrung Heroes			True Lies (6.40PM)					Sleepless In Seattle					
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	Ed, Edd N Eddy	Codename: Kids Next Door	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Gundam Wing	Shaman King	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Gundam Seed
Disney Channel	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Unizikative Bunny	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	America's Funniest Home Video	According To Jim	Wonderful World Of Disney	
Cinemax			13th Child Legend Of The Jersey Devil Volume I (3.45PM)				Purgatory				Saving Emily (7.20 PM)			The Ring				Momentum (10.55PM)	
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Wife Swap		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	Bewitched	Five Days To Midnight		Wife Swap		What Kind Of Mother Are You?			Just Cause (10.35PM)		Five Days To Midnight (11.25PM)
Discovery Channel		American Chopper		Mummy Autopsy		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Unsolved History				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Civilisations	
Sports Plus						TV Shopping		French Open '05 Day8 Rd. of 16											

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Editor Emmie G. Velarde

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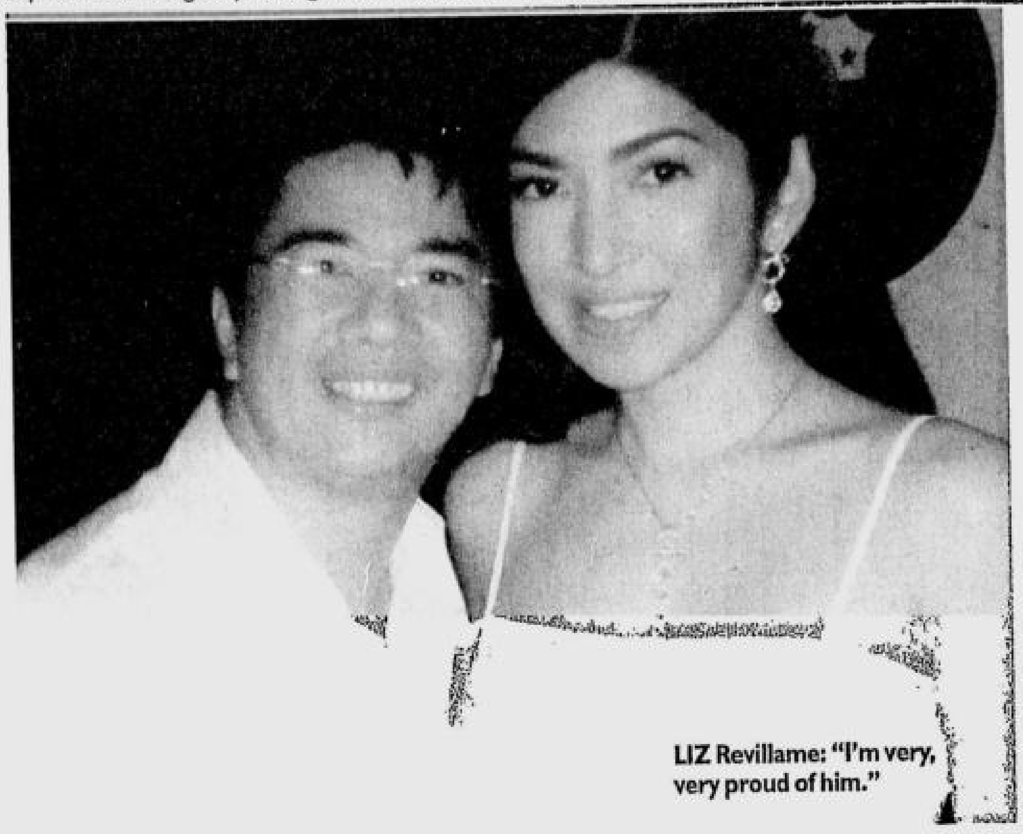


LIZ Revillame: "I'm very, very proud of him."

> 'He has to make people laugh in spite of all this'

Willie's bride behind him 'all the way'

By Nini Valera

BELEAGUERED ABS-CBN game show host Willie Revillame, who is facing sexual harassment charges filed by a former dancer on his TV program and a tabloid entertainment editor, has found the perfect woman with whom to face the uncertain future.

The woman, Liz Almora, 28, vowed to stand solidly behind Willie, 44.

"I'm here to support him… all the way," Liz told select members of the entertainment press last Thursday. "It's my commitment and responsibility as his wife. I'm very, very proud of my husband. I look forward to (spending) a lifetime with him."

Willie and Liz were married in civil rites on March 9 in Lipa City, with Mayor Vilma Santos officiating. The church wedding is set on June 7 at the Sanctuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati. Reception will follow at the NBC Tent at the Fort in Taguig City.

Liz distributed wedding invitations to the press, saying she had wanted to do so in person "to meet the press and friends of my husband." She also admitted that she was three months pregnant, so the church wedding would take place in June and not in December as originally planned.

Cool girl

Throughout the two-hour session with the press, some of whom badgered her with questions about the lawsuits that Willie was facing and about his on-screen personality that she herself would describe as "bastos," Liz, a former candidate in the Bb. Pilipinas beauty pageant kept her cool.

"I believe that my husband is innocent of the sexual harassment charges filed against him," she said.

She clarified that they had already decided to get married before the accusations were hurled at Willie.

"I've known Willie for five, almost six, years. I met him before he was terminated from 'Magandang Tanghali Bayan' (in 2003)," Liz said. "I want to clarify that the Willie that you know, the one that's 'bastos (rude),' which was what [got him] fired from 'MTB,' is different from the Willie in private life. I think [things are] just magnified because he's up there right now and that's the only thing that they can say about him to put him down."

But why?

Of the onslaught of allegations, she said, "We knew it was coming because we were told. We [also] read about it in the tabloids. Prior to the lawsuit, it was just a story that said this writer heard of a group of dancers complaining… and how come Willie was still like that? That's supposed to be why she came out in the open."

Willie made her read the story, Liz said, and then "told me what really happened."

She still couldn't understand, she said, "why she… and everybody came out when he's about to get married and when the ratings of his show are soaring."

Liz maintains: "They have no proof. I can't really discuss this lengthily because… I'm not a lawyer, I'm not Willie, and this is not the proper forum."

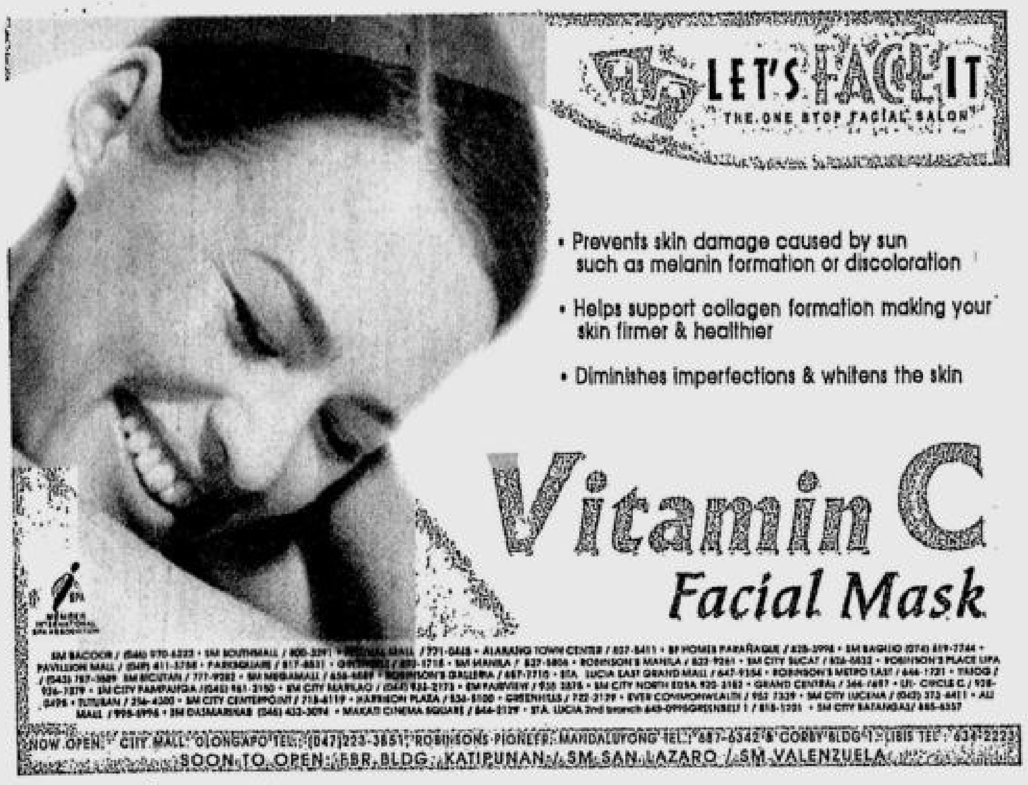
While admitting, "Well, he's naughty," Liz insisted: "Willie is very amiable. He's very compassionate. I believe in causes like empowering women, equality, eradicating poverty and giving children proper education, and Willie supports all of that. He's very much like me in that aspect. That's one thing that binds us."

Her husband's daily struggle to make people laugh in spite of his troubles was very painful, Liz said. "But he's happy to do it, although it's very difficult."

But she claimed to know exactly what was happening:

"I understand that not everybody can be happy for Willie and me. That people can be unkind, especially at a time like this, when he's getting mar-

WILLIE'S/A2-2



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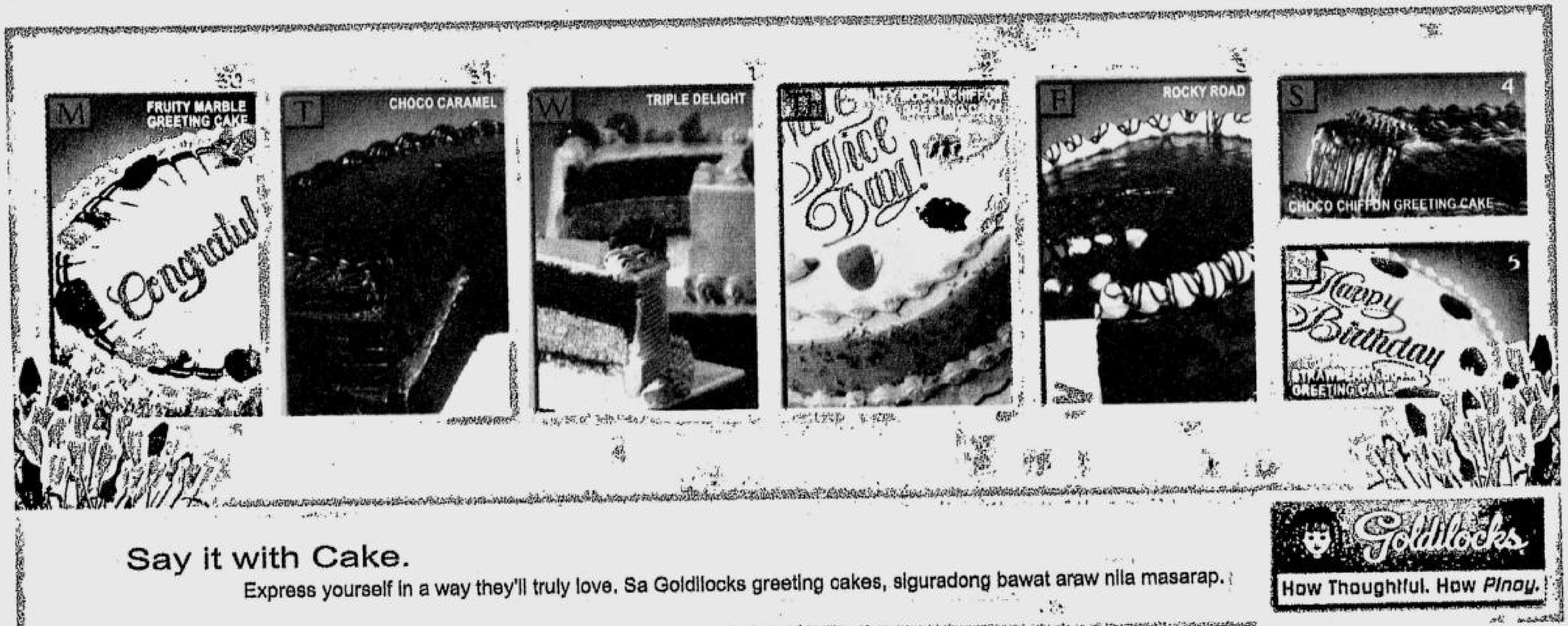

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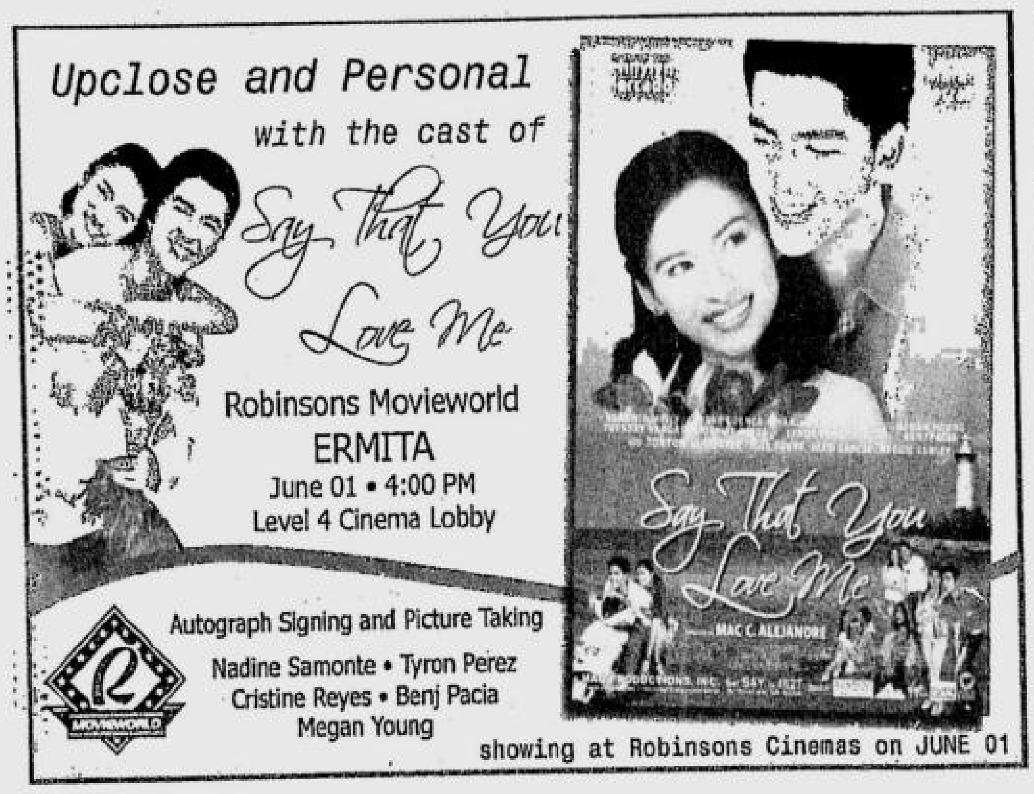
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'DARNA' VS 'METEOR'
Starting today, ABS-CBN is moving the time slot of the hit Korean telenovela, "Meteor Garden," currently being replayed daily at 6 p.m., to 7:30 p.m., right opposite GMA 7's "Darna." The Korean series stars F4, whose Jerry Yan was an instant star when the group visited Manila in late 2003. "Darna," on the other hand, stars GMA 7's star-of-the-moment, Angel Locsin.

Willie's bride...

From page A2-1

ried and his career is [doing very well]. I wish people would give this relationship, this wedding, a chance."

Liz claimed that she never expected to marry a celebrity.

"All the men that I dated were all very private persons, the opposite of Willie," she said. "But Willie's very funny, and that's very appealing. When everything becomes humorous, *parang* everything turns out light. It's public knowledge that comedians are the exact opposite in their private life. Willie is very quiet. One thing that's very appealing about him is his being very candid, he's being very natural. He's also not pretentious."

Patient

Willie was very patient during their courtship, according to Liz.

"He would wait for me to finish my dance classes even if it took three hours," she revealed. "Then we would practice my moves while he played the drums."

Willie also followed her where ever she went and lavished gifts on her. But she told him that she did not want to be wooed with material things, "which get in the way of knowing the person." They then agreed to give each other only food.

Since their civil wedding, Liz revealed, they have lived in his house in Capitol Homes, Quezon City. She has not renovated the place, which she described as a bachelor's abode with orange curtains.

"I'm too busy planning the wedding, and my pregnancy is difficult," she said. "Our next project after the wedding is a nursery for the baby."

Invited

Liz said she wants to have a girl, but Willie wants a boy. He has three daughters from previous relationships. His eldest daughter is Meryl Soriano, with Vicky Soriano, Maricel's sister.

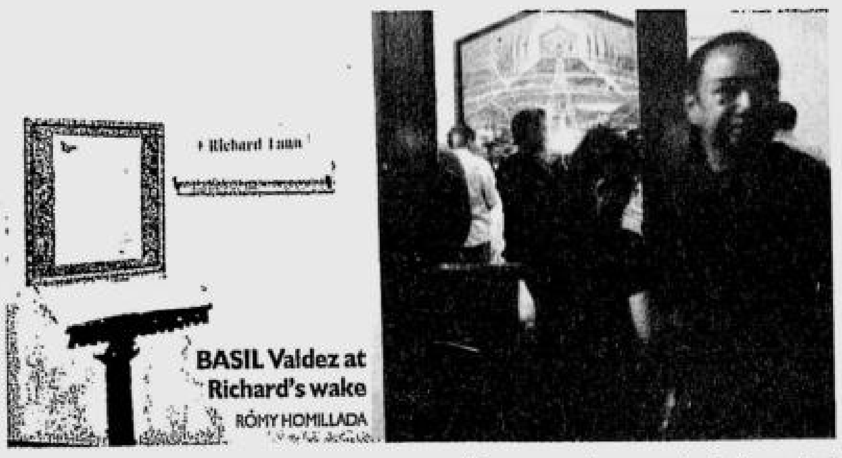
Among Willie's exes, Liz said, she has invited Vicky and Princess Punzalan to the wedding. "I don't know about the others. That's up to Willie."

The list of sponsors include First Gentleman Miguel Arroyo, show biz luminaries like Sharon Cuneta, and personal friends.

Richard Tann's passing 'all too sudden'

It was the eve of the birthday of his longtime partner, and just days after his 51st

By Bayani San Diego Jr.



BASIL Valdez at Richard's wake
RÓMY HOMILLADA

THAT he passed away on the eve of the birthday (May 29) of his longtime partner, fashion designer Inno Sotto, lent the passing of singer-lyricist-composer Richard Tann an unexpected air of drama.

Tann himself just celebrated his 51st birthday on May 5.

He always had a flair for the dramatic. His ongoing project is a series of 10-minute plays at Nicotina Garden Pavilion, a restaurant-theater that he put up only over a year ago.

"It was all too sudden," was the common refrain from friends who gathered on the first night of the wake at the Sanctuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park. Among the first to arrive were beauty expert Dr. Vicki Belo, restaurateur Margarita Fores and fashion editor Michael Salientes.

Understandably, Sotto was distraught.

Still, he tried his best to comfort the others just as steeped in grief, including singer Basil Valdez, whom he bumped into at the door of the chapel, and embraced tightly.

For the most part, however, Sotto was holed up in a private room, kept company by Hugo, a Pomeranian.

"Hugo is their baby," Fores said, smiling sadly.

Fores, whose fondest memories of Tann are food-related, ended up catering for Sotto's birthday . . . at Richard's wake.

Hewing closely to Chinese tradition, the family asked that no photos of the coffin be taken. They are also keeping the coffin closed; viewing will be restricted to the nearest and dearest.

Salientes and Fores said they were choosing to remember Tann as he was, "brimming with life and child-like wonderment."

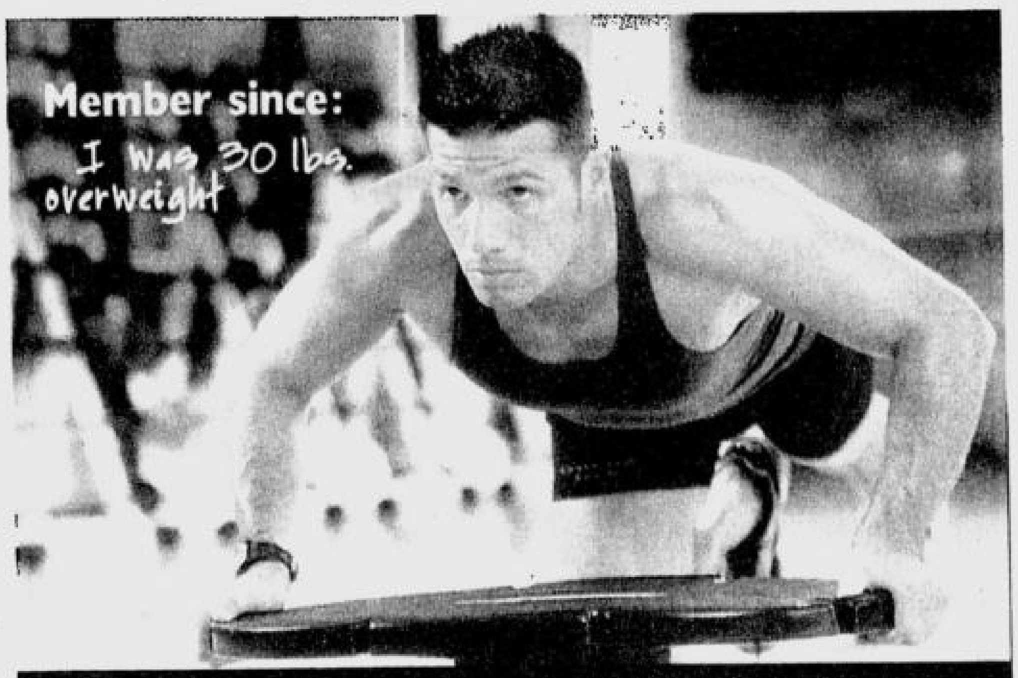
"He was such a sweetie pie," recalled singer Jacqui Magno, Tann's group mate in the prime '70s show band Circus. Magno, who was in Aklan, told INQUIRER Entertainment: "He will be sorely missed. I've always been a fan of his beautiful voice."

"His voice was unique," agreed Valdez, another Circus Band alumnus. "I was the one who trained him and got him into the band."

Talent manager Bibsy Carballo, another close associate, was stunned: "I still can't believe it."

Cremation is set tomorrow (May 31).

DARLING DEBUTANTE
Teen actress Jennylyn Mercado takes a real-life lead role tonight in the country's first movie premiere and debut celebration in one. Jennylyn stars in MAQ Productions' "Say That You Love Me" with sweetheart Mark Herras (left). MAQ is hosting her birthday bash at the SM Megamall. Jennylyn will wear a Rajo Laurel creation (center). In right photo above, the debutante is with the celebrity designer and her producer, Roselle Monteverde Teo.



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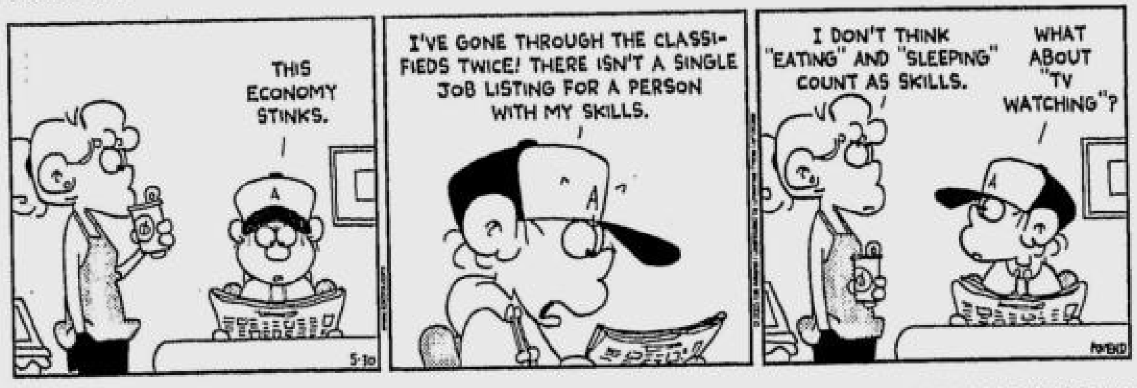
BY BILL AMEND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I DON'T THINK "EATING" AND "SLEEPING" COUNT AS SKILLS.
WHAT ABOUT "TV WATCHING"?
5-30

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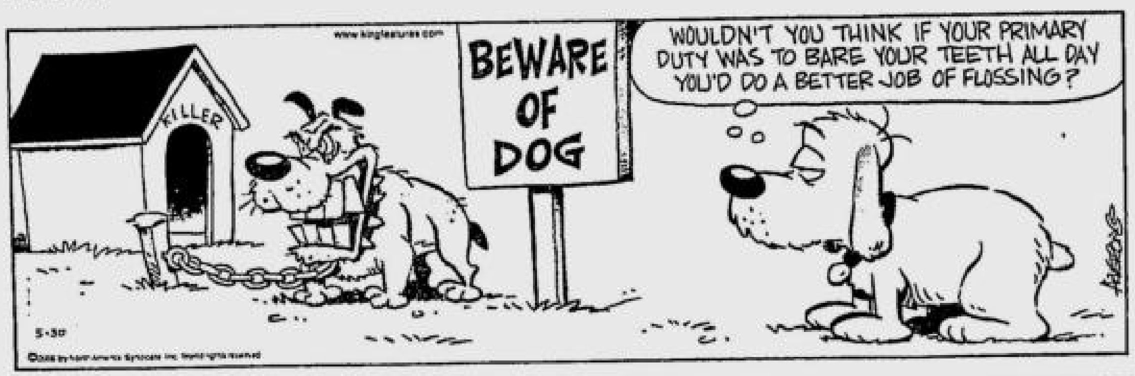
BY TOM ARMSTRONG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5-30

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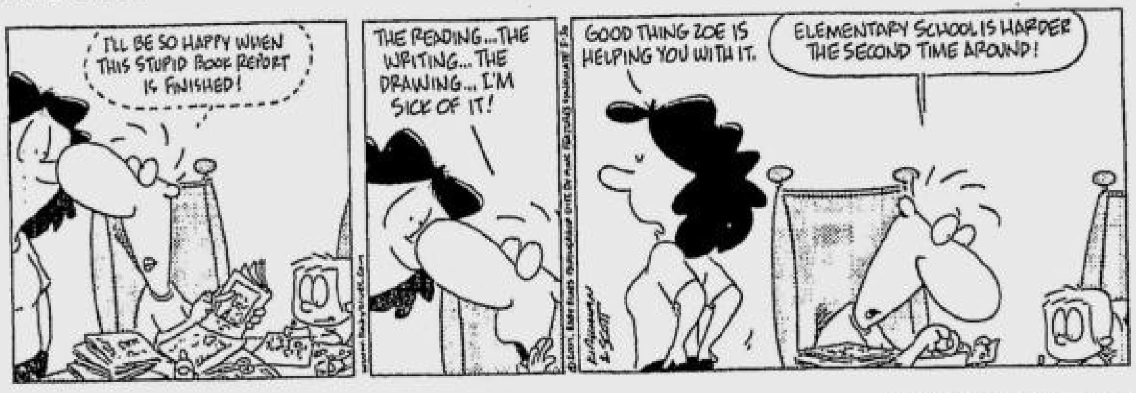
BY JERRY SCOTT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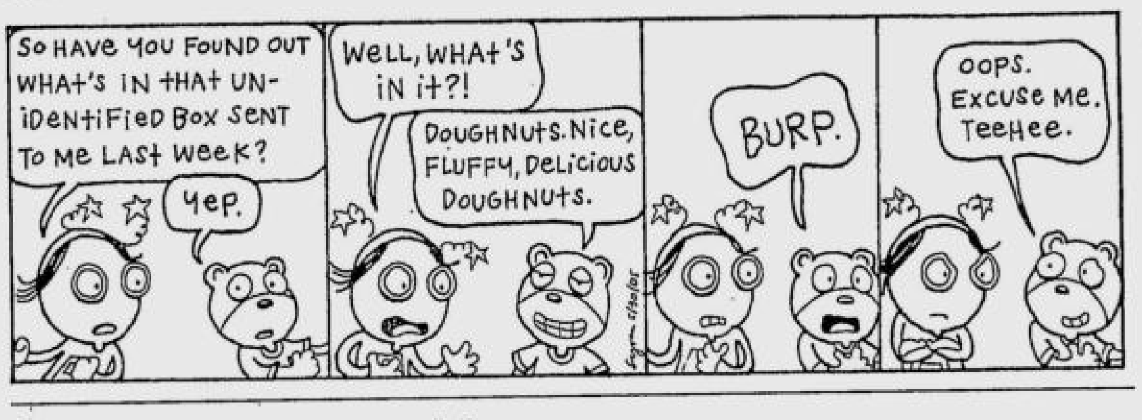
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL IS HARDER THE SECOND TIME AROUND!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


SO HAVE YOU FOUND OUT WHAT'S IN THAT UN-IDENTIFIED BOX SENT TO ME LAST WEEK?
YEP.
WELL, WHAT'S IN IT?!
DOUGHNUTS. NICE, FLUFFY, DELICIOUS DOUGHNUTS.
BURP.
OOPS. EXCUSE ME. TEEHEE.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are independent and freedom-loving. You need a lot of change in your life. (Routine bores you.) You're full of big ideas and constantly on the go. You do things quickly and decisively. Your self-assurance inspires confidence. The year ahead favors all social activities and partnerships. Enjoy!
Birthdate of: Wynonna Judd, singer; Mel Blanc, cartoon voice; Meredith MacRae, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a wonderful day to talk to partners, close friends and members of the public. You feel friendly, big-hearted and enthusiastic. People are glad to see you!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a marvelous day for business and commerce. You can make great strides at work. Financial matters are extremely favored. Don't be afraid to act on any bright ideas you have.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel vigorous, positive and happy today. In fact, you feel you can conquer the world! Although you're enthusiastic today, you don't really want to work.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Whether you are alone, at home or at work, you feel quite peaceful today. You're reassured by the support of your family and your domestic scene.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a great day to schmooze with friends. It's also a wonderful time to work with groups. Your enthusiasm attracts people to you, and together you can accomplish a lot.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): People think you're the cat's meow today! You look successful, and nothing succeeds like success. Bosses and VIPs will listen to you. This is a great day for business.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Travel plans look exciting. You're thinking big! Business related to the media, publishing, legal matters and medicine is extremely profitable. Your ideas can fly today.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Others might be very generous to you today. Or perhaps your partner will get a raise or a bonus. Somehow, the wealth of others can benefit you now. Hooray!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Today your ruler, Jupiter, makes a lovely aspect to the Sun. Everyone feels happy, upbeat and positive! You'll be very successful in your dealings with others. People want to help you today.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): The vibes at work are excellent today. Your co-workers are in a happy frame of mind. You can get a lot done simply because cooperation is easy now.

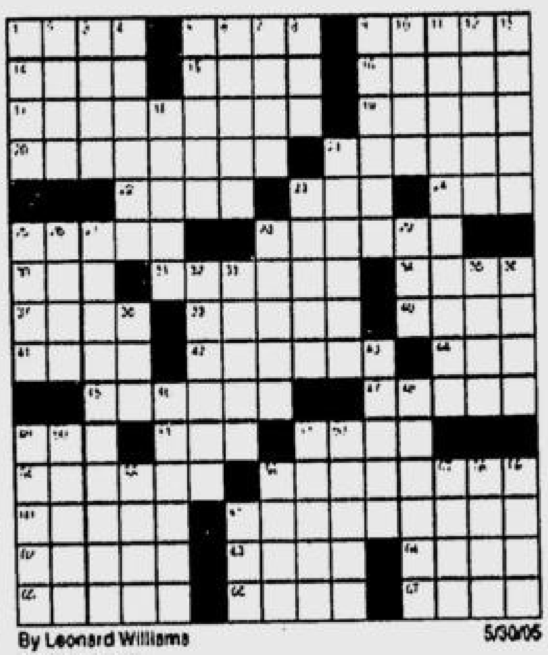
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): This is a good day to play a long shot. You feel lucky. Romance is favored, and vacations are fun. Work or playful activities with children bring you joy and rewards.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This is an excellent day for real estate deals. It's also a good day for family businesses or doing anything that will improve where you live. Business and commerce are definitely favored.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
- 1 Glasgow gent
- 5 Eden gardener
- 9 Stand in for
- 14 McKellen and McEwan
- 15 'Damn Yankees' vixen
- 16 Inclined trough
- 17 Ham partner for Seuss
- 19 To the point
- 20 Frenzy
- 21 Not see eye to eye
- 22 Fill past full
- 23 Kanga's kid
- 24 __-relief
- 25 Madden
- 28 Actress Durbin
- 30 Negative conjunction
- 31 Outlying district
- 34 School collar
- 37 Classic actor Edmund
- 39 Highest country
- 40 Tours to be
- 41 In addition
- 42 One with a claim on his property
- 44 Roman law
- 45 Fails
- 47 Dianne of 'Hannah and Her Sisters'
- 49 Viscous liquid
- 51 Shrew
- 52 Domestic help
- 54 Took flight to unite
- 56 Get
- 60 Oak-to-be
- 61 Piece purchases
- 62 Distributor part
- 63 One of HOMES
- 64 Skirt type
- 65 Impudent
- 66 Nautical yeses
- 67 Saxophonist Getz

DOWN
- 1 Sound of relief
- 2 Grant for a Hitchcock film?
- 3 Small bills
- 4 Pestilent fly
- 5 Eagle-eyed
- 6 Wandering calf
- 7 Pond plant
- 8 More in Mexico
- 9 Call on the set
- 10 Kitchen head
- 11 Inter-departmental conflict
- 12 Bewildered
- 13 Visionaries
- 18 Gets closer
- 21 Possible to accomplish
- 23 Aired again
- 25 'Puppy Love' singer
- 26 Comedic Coward
- 27 Local level
- 28 Patsies
- 29 Born in the society pages
- 32 Remove software
- 33 Entity
- 35 Raw minerals
- 36 On deck
- 38 Feminist grp
- 43 J.R. or Jock
- 46 William Sydney Porter
- 48 Language quirks
- 49 Crocodile __
- 50 Big name in aluminum
- 52 Physicist Curie
- 53 Pages
- 55 Paid players
- 56 'Frankenstein' author Shelley
- 57 Got something done
- 58 Author Ferber
- 59 A-apple connection
- 61 Truly



By Leonard Williams
Fort Wayne, IN

5/30/05

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

C	H	A	R	I	T	Y	■	P	R	E	P	A	R	E
R	O	S	A	L	I	E	■	R	E	G	A	L	I	A
U	N	S	P	E	N	T	■	E	X	O	T	I	C	S
S	E	E	■	■	■	I	H	S	■	■	■	V	E	E
H	Y	M	N	A	L	■	A	T	E	L	I	E	R	S
A	B	B	O	T	T	■	R	A	Y	E	D	■	■	■
B	E	L	T	E	C	■	A	M	E	N	A	B	L	E
L	E	E	■	■	■	A	S	P	■	■	■	R	A	N
E	S	S	E	N	C	E	S	■	B	O	O	I	N	G
■	■	■	L	O	I	R	E	■	R	E	N	E	G	E
T	E	R	I	G	A	R	R	■	A	R	T	F	U	L
A	H	O	■	■	■	I	S	H	■	■	■	C	A	U
C	O	U	L	O	M	B	■	U	M	B	R	A	G	E
E	S	T	I	V	A	L	■	C	R	U	I	S	E	R
T	E	S	T	A	T	E	■	K	I	N	D	E	S	T

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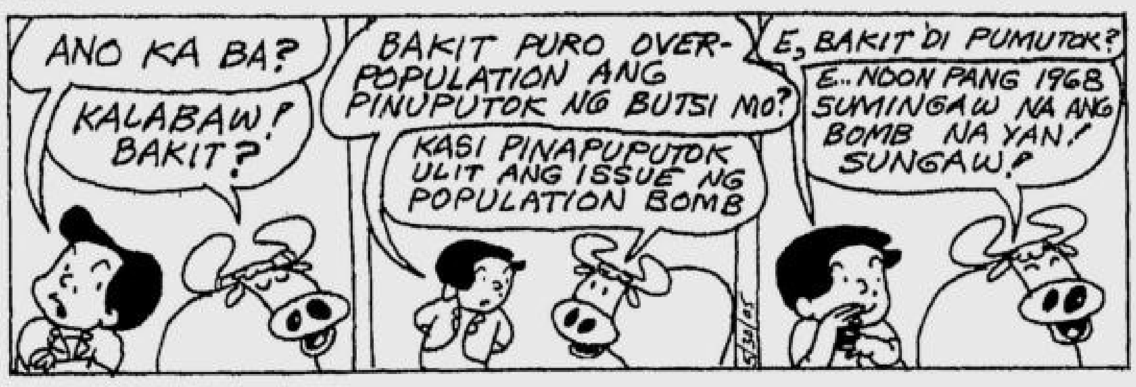
5/28/05

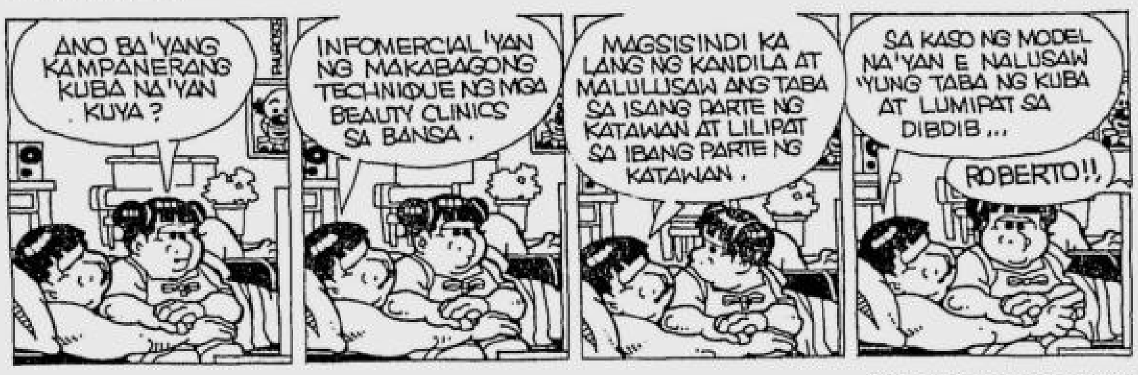
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ANO KA BA?
KALABAW! BAKIT?
BAKIT PURO OVER-POPULATION ANG PINUPUTOK NG BUTSI MO?
KASI PINAPUPUTOK ULIT ANG ISSUE NG POPULATION BOMB
E, BAKIT 'DI PUMUTOK?
E.. NOON PANG 1968 SUMINGAW NA ANG BOMB NA YAN! SUNGAW!

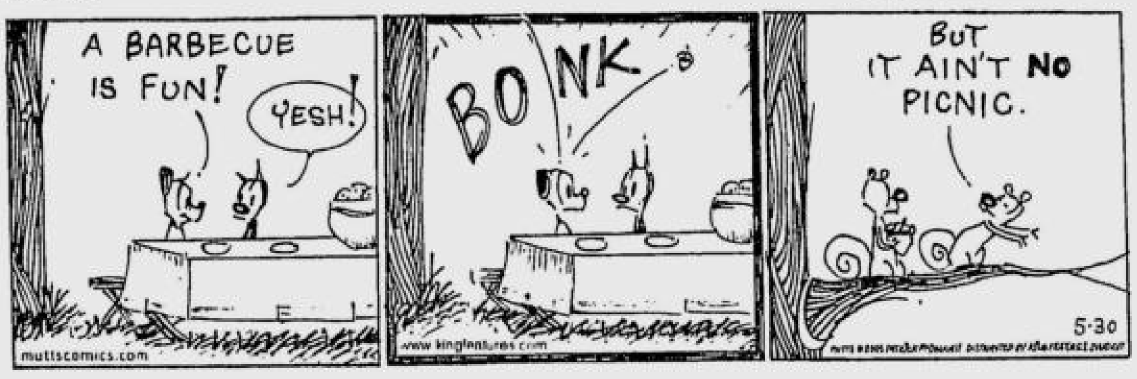
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO BA 'YANG KAMPANERANG KUBA NA 'YAN KUYA?
INFOMERCIAL 'YAN NG MAKABAGONG TECHNIQUE NG MGA BEAUTY CLINICS SA BANSA.
MAGSISINDI KA LANG NG KANDILA AT MALULUSAW ANG TABA SA ISANG PARTE NG KATAWAN AT LILIPAT SA IBANG PARTE NG KATAWAN.
SA KASO NG MODEL NA 'YAN E NALUSAW 'YUNG TABA NG KUBA AT LUMIPAT SA DIBDIB...
ROBERTO!!

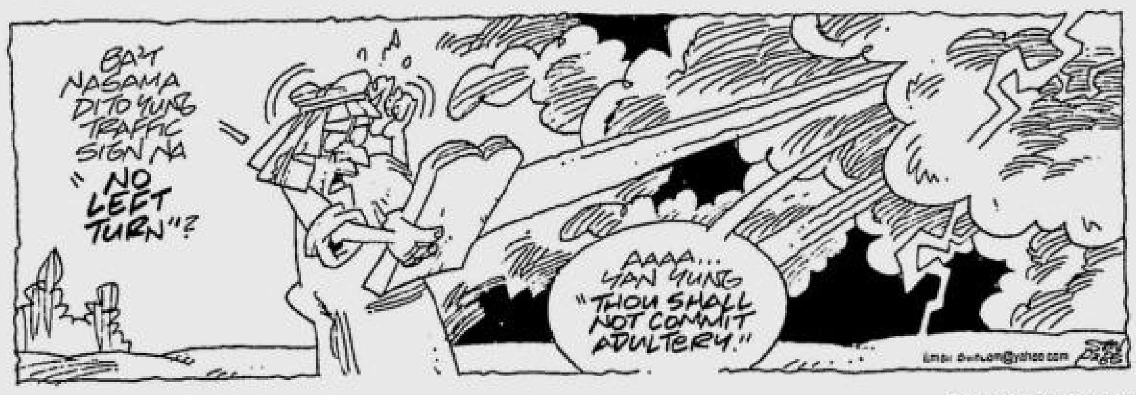
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


A BARBECUE IS FUN!
YESH!
BONK
BUT IT AIN'T NO PICNIC.
5-30

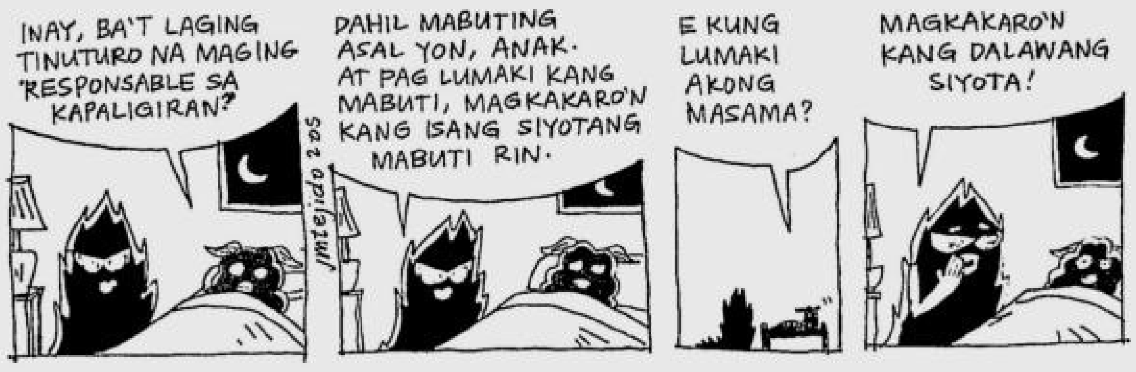
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BA'T NASAMA DITO YUNG TRAFFIC SIGN NA "NO LEFT TURN"?
AAAA... YAN YUNG "THOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY."

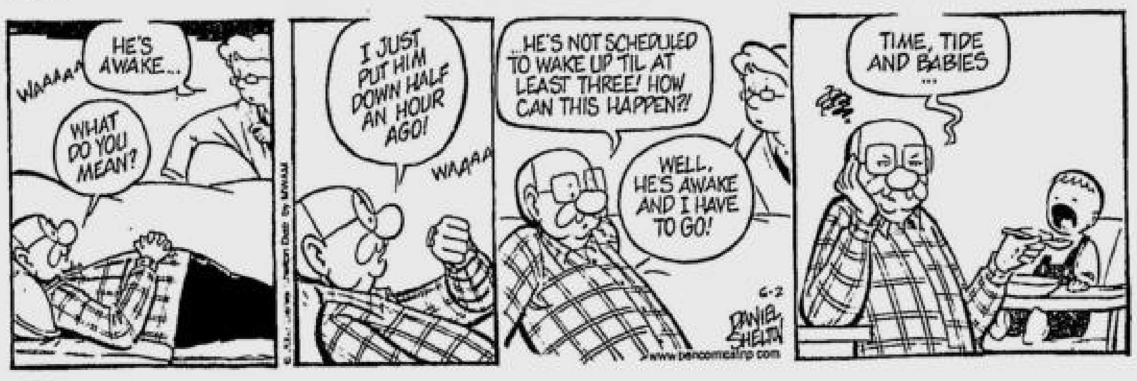
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


INAY, BA'T LAGING TINUTURO NA MAGING 'RESPONSABLE SA KAPALIGIRAN?
DAHIL MABUTING ASAL YON, ANAK. AT PAG LUMAKI KANG MABUTI, MAGKAKARO'N KANG ISANG SIYOTANG MABUTI RIN.
E KUNG LUMAKI AKONG MASAMA?
MAGKAKARO'N KANG DALAWANG SIYOTA!

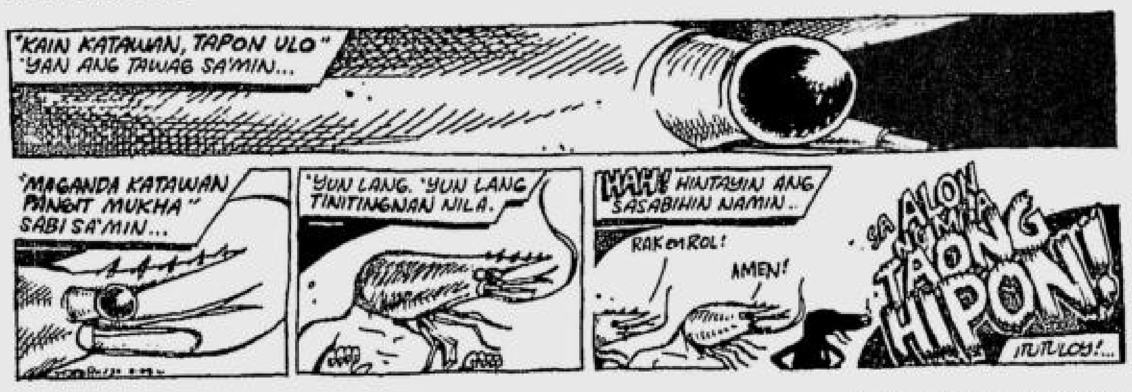
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WAAAA
HE'S AWAKE...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I JUST PUT HIM DOWN HALF AN HOUR AGO!
WAAAA
...HE'S NOT SCHEDULED TO WAKE UP 'TIL AT LEAST THREE! HOW CAN THIS HAPPEN?!
WELL, HE'S AWAKE AND I HAVE TO GO!
TIME, TIDE AND BABIES ...

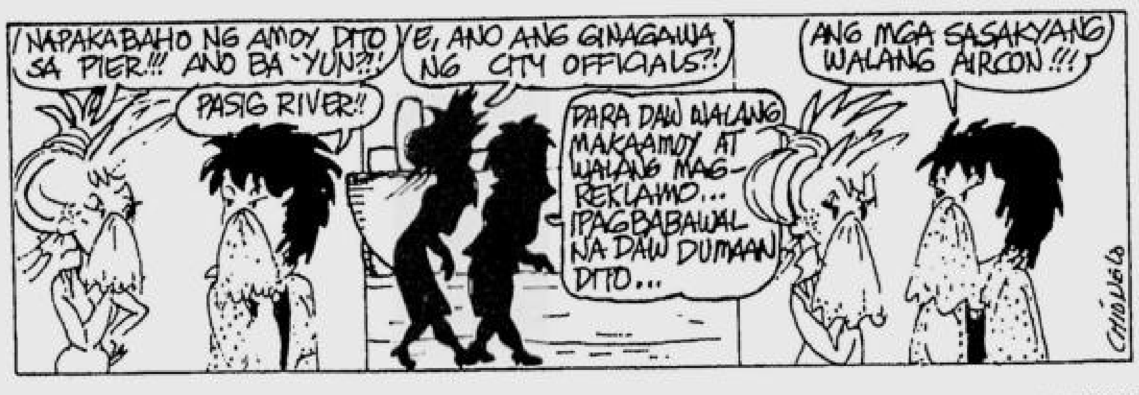
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


"KAIN KATAWAN, TAPON ULO" 'YAN ANG TAWAG SA'MIN...
"MAGANDA KATAWAN PANGIT MUKHA" SABI SA'MIN...
'YUN LANG. 'YUN LANG TINITINGNAN NILA.
HAH! HINTAYIN ANG SASABIHIN NAMIN..
RAK EN ROL!
AMEN!
SA ALON NG MGA TAONG HIPON!
ITUTULOY!...

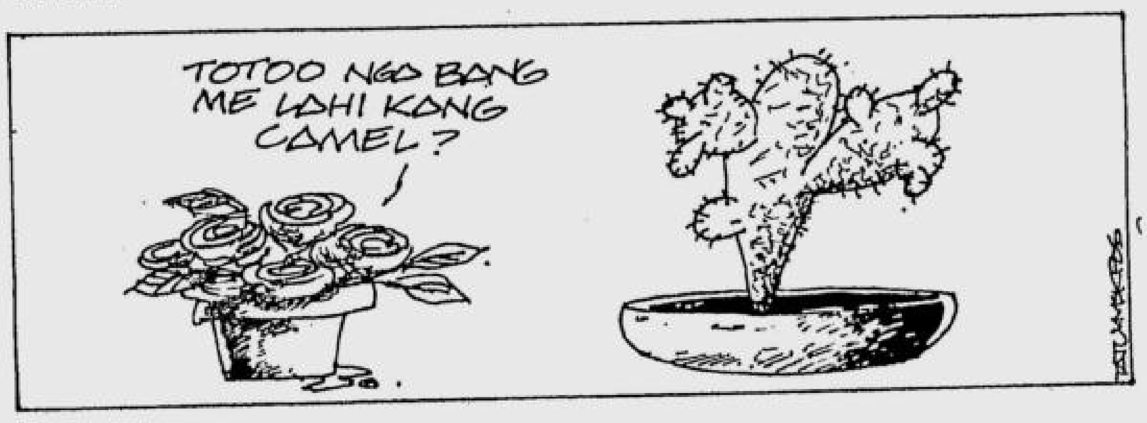
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


NAPAKABAHO NG AMOY DITO SA PIER!!! ANO BA 'YUN?!
PASIG RIVER!!
E, ANO ANG GINAGAWA NG CITY OFFICIALS?!
PARA DAW WALANG MAKAAMOY AT WALANG MAG-REKLAMO... IPAGBABAWAL NA DAW DUMAAN DITO...
ANG MGA SASAKYANG WALANG AIRCON!!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TOTOO NGA BANG ME LAHI KONG CAMEL?

Positive signs on the movie horizon

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THESE days, many people are cynically declaring Filipino movies to be either dying or dead. We have resolutely refused to join the doom-and-gloom soothsayers and mourners, because it's too easy. It's more creative to look for signs of an incipient resurgence—and they *are* there, you'd better believe it.

For one thing, more movies are being made. Last year, there was the occasional month when only one new Filipino movie was being shown. Well, this month could end up with four or even five new production openings. Hey, that's a big improvement, right?

We also hear that a major studio will try to come out with one movie per month this year. We pray that it achieves its goal, because all that production activity will be good for the industry in general, and could energize other producers into pumping up their own shooting schedules as well.

Other positive signs: The first Cinemalaya Alternative Film Festival opens this July, and will add nine new digital movies, all by first-time feature filmmakers, to this year's total of movies produced. And the Cinema One tilt will add six more.

Plus, the Metro filmfest in December will contribute from six to nine more productions.

In addition, more new directors are financing their own digital features, like the recent "Boso" and "Ang Lagusan." As more people initiate their own alternative productions outside of the commercial mainstream, they're adding to the number of movies produced in 2005, which should be bigger than last year's total. If we've been in a slump, that means that we're slowly but surely pulling out of it.

Still other positive signs don't have anything to do with production totals, but they're encouraging, nevertheless. For instance, some weeks ago, we were very gratified to watch the short films produced by the students of **Marilou Diaz-Abaya**'s new Asia Pacific Film Institute.

After only three months of schooling, the APFI students came up with strikingly imaginative, diverse and confident productions that impressed the SRO crowd that had the pleasure of previewing them.

We trust that, with some more months of studies and hard work, some of Marilou's talented film students will be making their own feature films—perhaps as early as next year? That would keep the momentum of our industry's recovery going—a good thing all around.

We watched the APFI showcase with a mainstream producer, and he said that he, too, was impressed with the high level of the students' work. Like us, he attributed this in part to Marilou's patient and committed mentoring.

All thanks, therefore, to Marilou and other hardworking visionaries who are working hard to train the filmmakers of tomorrow to do the best work they can. If you want to be a part of this new wave in Philippine cinema *and* are prepared to work your butt off, you can inquire about the institute's new courses and workshops at the institute's offices at the Cine Color Studios, corner of Edsa and Ortigas Avenue.

David Benoit

In "David Benoit: The Ultimate Collection," MCA Music presents a double-CD compilation of great picks from Benoit's past albums. These include the 1994 hit, "The Benoit/Freeman Project," with "After the Love Has Gone," "When She Believed in Me" and "It's the Thought that Counts."

From the tribute recording "Here's to You, Charlie Brown: 50 Great Years" comes "Linus and Lucy." And "Every Step of the Way" is represented by "The Key to You," "I Just Can't Stop Loving You," "Shibuya Station," "Saturdays" and its title track.

On Cartoon Network

"Good Morning Scooby" starts June 6, weekdays from 6:30 to 8 a.m. The Scoob-ster hosts shows like "Powerpuff Girls," "Dexter" and "Courage."

Also starting on June 6, weeknights from 6 to 7 p.m. is "Miguzi." Follow Erin as she travels to a secret spaceship at the bottom of the sea inhabited by Erin's alien jibber-speaking pals. They catch new episodes of "Atomic Betty," "Mucha Lucha," "Xiaolin Showdown," "Teen Titans," "Justice League Unlimited," and the premiere episodes of "The Batman."

Fridays at 6 p.m. starting June 3, "Dexter's Laboratory" features the boy scientist in his high-tech lab for one final experiment.

SHANG CINEPLEX

① MADAGASCAR
MTRCB: GP
12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00

② STAR WARS III
MTRCB: GP
1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00

③ HOUSE OF WAX
MTRCB: R-13
11:25, 2:00, 4:35, 7:10, 9:50

④ MADAGASCAR
MTRCB: GP
12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:10, 9:30

PREMIERE THEATRE STAR WARS III
MTRCB: GP 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00

Movies and schedules are subject to change wthout prior notice.

Catch the Cineplex Special

Enjoy 20% discount on Matinee Show tickets at the Cineplex, except on selected blockbuster movies.

From Monday to Friday: all Matinee Shows screenings are scheduled before 4pm.

Enjoy Double Treats

Get one (1) free URBANSPA Express Massage or a P250 Urban Spa cash coupon for every single purchase of four (4) Shang Cineplex (Cinema 1-4) or Two (2) Premiere Theatre tickets.
See posters and flyers for details
Per DTI NCR Permit No. A3 183, Series of 2005

Regular Ticket Price
Cinemas 1 to 4 - P150
Premiere Theatre - P295 (includes unlimited popcorn and beverage)
Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2227 / 633-4736 for more details.
Shangri-La Plaza

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City
Voted Best Movie Theater
-Philippine Daily Inquirer's 2004 Yearend Reader Survey
For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1 STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
10:20, 1:20, 4:20, 7:20, 10:20
GP

2 MADAGASCAR
10:55, 1:05, 3:15, 5:25
7:35, 10:20
GP

3 STAR WARS III: REVENGE OF THE SITH
11:05, 2:05, 5:05,
8:05, 11:05
GP

4 HOUSE OF WAX
12:30, 3:05, 5:40,
8:15, 10:50
R-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

HOUSE OF WAX R13 1:20,3:40.6:00,8:20,10:30	STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 12:30,3:30	MADAGASCAR GP 1:00,3:00,5.00,7.00,9:00
STAR WARS: EPISODE III GP 1:30,4:30.7:30,10:20	UNLEASHED R13 11:45,1:55,4:05, 6:15.8:25,10:25	MADAGASCAR GP 11:50,1:50,3:50, 5:50,7:50,9:50

star group of cinemas movie guide
IN DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND

starmall EDSA-SHAW
Tel. No. 726.61.50
3 La Visa Loca
4 Unleashed
5 Star Wars Episode 3
For every purchase of 1 Movie Ticket at Starmall Edsa Gets 1 Free Yellow Swiper Game at TimeZone Starmall Edsa
DTI-NCR A3-377 Series of 2005

METROPOLIS ALABANG star
Tel. No. 850.42.85
1 Unleashed
2 La Visa Loca
3 Under Renovation
4 Under Renovation
5 Star Wars Episode 3
6 House of Wax

starmall LAS PIÑAS
Tel. No. 873.50.04
1 XXX 2
2 Rental Reservation
Buy 3 Movie Tickets And Win Jollibee Products! At Metropolis Alabang and Starmall Edsa
DTI-NCR A2-288, Series 2005
DTI-NCR A3-381, Series 2005

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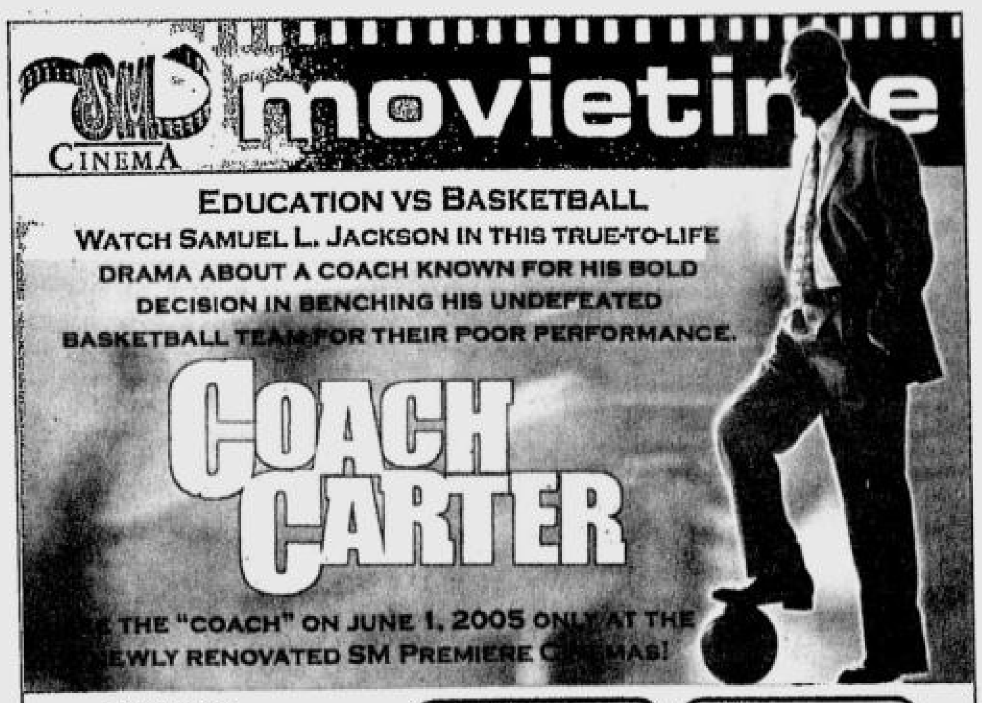
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA

THEATRE MALL GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III - GP 1:30, 4:20, 7:10, 10:00
CINEMA 2 MADAGASCAR - GP 12:15, 2:25, 4:35, 6:45, 9:00
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

PROMENADE GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III - GP 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00
CINEMA 4 HOUSE OF WAX - GP 11:35, 2:10, 4:45, 7:20, 10:00
CINEMA 5 UNLEASHED - R13 11:30, 1:50, 4:10, 6:30, 8:50

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM
June 3, 2005 ANTON DIVA & CHOCOLEIT 8PM
JUNE 9, 10, 16 & 17 GARY V. @ 22 8PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635



SM CINEMA movietime

EDUCATION VS BASKETBALL
WATCH SAMUEL L. JACKSON IN THIS TRUE-TO-LIFE DRAMA ABOUT A COACH KNOWN FOR HIS BOLD DECISION IN BENCHING HIS UNDEFEATED BASKETBALL TEAM FOR THEIR POOR PERFORMANCE.
COACH CARTER
THE "COACH" ON JUNE 1, 2005 ONLY AT THE NEWLY RENOVATED SM PREMIERE CINEMAS!

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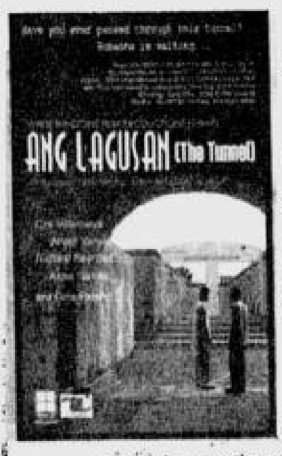
VISITUS@ www.smcinema.co

smcinemaexclusive



From the producers of the International critically aclaimed film "Sa Kandungan ng Langit" (Best Drama Feature Film award, New York International Independent Film And Video Festival 2004 and Winner, Remi platinum award to the World Film Festival, Houston, Texas) comes another rivetingtale about a man in search for his true identity in "Ang Lagusan"

Watch this enthralling Digital Film starring Cris Villanueva, Gina pareño and Alfred Vargas. Showing exclusively at SM City Sta Mesa

GUARANTEED SEATS

the podium cinema
1. STAR WARS : EPISODE III
11:00 FS / 11:30 MP / 2:10 / 4:50 / 7:30 9:40 LFS / 10:10 LMP / 12:30 END
2. MADAGASCAR
12:10 FS / 12:40 MP / 2:40 / 4:40 / 6:40 8:40 / 10:10 LFS / 10:40 LMP / 12:10 END
633-4876

sm megamall cinema 1
HOUSE OF WAX
11:50 FS / 12:20 MP / 2:40 / 5:00 / 7:20 9:10 LFS / 9:40 LMP / 11:30 END
633-1901

sm cebu cinema
CINEMA 1: KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11:20 FS / 11:30 MP / 2:00 / 4:30 / 7:00 9:25 LFS / 9:30 LMP / 11:55 END
CINEMA 3: STAR WARS: EPISODE III
10:30 FS / 11:00 MP / 1:39 / 4:16 / 6:53 9:13 LFS / 9:30 LMP / 11:50 END
(032) 231-3878

METRO MANILA

sm megamall
1 HOUSE OF WAX
2 UNLEASHED
3 MADAGASCAR
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 AMITYVILLE HORROR
6 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
7 RESERVED
8 RESERVED
9 RESERVED
10 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
11 TRUMPETS
12 LA VISA LOCA

sm city fairview
1 POOHS HEFFALUMP MOVIE
2 IN GOOD COMPANY
3 CAN THIS BE LOVE
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
5 UNLEASHED
6 LA VISA LOCA
7 HOUSE OF WAX
8 MADAGASCAR
9 BIKINI OPEN
10 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
11 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
12 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

sm city north edsa
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 HOUSE OF WAX
3 RESERVED
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 MADAGASCAR
7 STAR WARS: EPISODE III
8 UNLEASHED

sm city manila
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 MADAGASCAR
3 ARE WE THERE YET?
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
5 xXx 2 : THE NEXT LEVEL
6 UNLEASHED
7 HOUSE OF WAX
8 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
9 LA VISA LOCA
10 CAN THIS BE LOVE
11 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
12 BIKINI OPEN

sm city sta. mesa
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 HOUSE OF WAX
3 UNLEASHED
4 RESERVED
5 RESERVED
6 BIKINI OPEN
7 MADAGASCAR
8 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
9 LA VISA LOCA
10 ANG LAGUSAN

sm city southmall
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 UNLEASHED
5 BIKINI OPEN
6 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
7 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
8 MADAGASCAR
9 HOUSE OF WAX
10 LA VISA LOCA

sm city bicutan
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 HOUSE OF WAX
4 UNLEASHED

sm cinema tutuban
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

sm supercenter sucat
1 LA VISA LOCA
2 UNLEASHED
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 HOUSE OF WAX

LUZON

sm city pampanga
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
3 AMITYVILLE HORROR
4 BIKINI OPEN
5 MADAGASCAR
6 LA VISA LOCA

sm city baguio
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 MADAGASCAR
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 ALONE IN THE DARK

sm city batangas
1 MADAGASCAR
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
4 THE WEDDING DATE

sm city dasmariñas
1 MADAGASCAR
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 IN GOOD COMPANY
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

sm city marilao
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 LA VISA LOCA
3 MADAGASCAR
4 THE AMITYVILLE HORROR

sm city bacoor
1 AMITYVILLE HORROR
2 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
3 UNLEASHED
4 HOUSE OF WAX
5 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
6 LA VISA LOCA
7 MADAGASCAR
8 BIKINI OPEN

sm city lucena
1 MADAGASCAR
2 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 THE WEDDING DATE

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

sm city cebu
1 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
2 RESERVED
3 STAR WARS : EPISODEIII
4 MADAGASCAR
5 STAR WARS : EPISODEIII
6 BIKINI OPEN
7 LA VISA LOCA
8 UNLEASHED

sm city iloilo
1 BIKINI OPEN
2 RESERVED
3 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
4 MADAGASCAR
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
7 RESERVED
8 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

sm city davao
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 MADAGASCAR
3 KINGDOM OF HEAVEN
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
5 LA VISA LOCA
6 UNLEASHED

sm city cagayan de oro
1 STAR WARS : EPISODE III
2 ALONE IN THE DARK
3 LA VISA LOCA
4 STAR WARS : EPISODE III

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

Red Carpet PREMIERE of a lot like LOVE
MAY 30,2005
SM Megamall
Cinema 10
7:30 pm
MTRCB RATING: PG13

Kutcher should hush cynics with this

NEW YORK— Ashton Kutcher is an easy target.

He's pretty, he's popular. He has a hit TV series ("That '70s Show") and a hot girlfriend (Demi Moore) who might be more than that, if you track the tabloid pregnancy rumors.

The "Dude, Where's My Car?" star's previous attempt at being taken seriously—last year's "The Butterfly Effect"—was met with nearly universal critical derision.

But Kutcher should silence the cynics in "A Lot Like Love."

He shows unexpected depth and range as the slightly nerdy half of a star-crossed "When Harry Met Sally…"-style duo, opposite the lovely, slightly bohemian Amanda Peet.

(And if you're going to be pilfering material from others, one of Rob Reiner's best movies is certainly a worthwhile source.)

The TV commercials for "A Lot Like Love"—in which Peet and Kutcher spit water at each other and shove things up their noses—make it look like a wacky, gross-out romp. While the two do have a goofy playfulness, their relationship is surprisingly warm and sweet.

Kutcher has a stillness about him we've never seen before, considering he's made his name with a jittery brand of comedy, and he effectively uses the softness of his brown eyes to express vulnerability. Even his voice sounds different—it's deeper, more low-key.

Peet, meanwhile, steps easily into the leading-lady role after years of supporting parts in movies like "The Whole Nine Yards" and "Something's Gotta Give," and has an effortlessly sexy energy.

Their characters, Oliver and Emily, repeatedly meet each other over a seven-year period and form an easy, comfortable friendship that morphs into an amorphous romance.

They're always in other cities and involved with other people but (of course) they're destined to be together, although on paper they seem totally wrong for each other. When they first meet in the mid-'90s, he's fresh out of college and concerned about getting "his ducks in a row"—job, car, house, wife. She's fresh out a rock band and seemingly aimless.

A few years after hooking up on a cross-country flight and walking around New York City together, Oliver ends up forming an online diaper delivery service with a friend (Kal Penn) in San Francisco. Emily, back in Los Angeles, tries be an actress and finds she has a talent for photography.

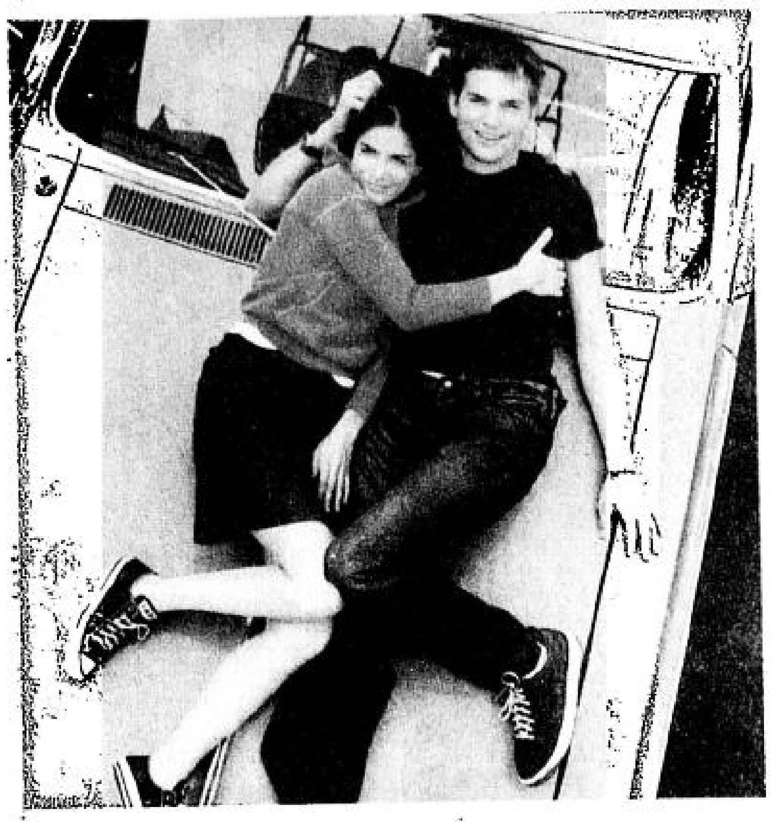
They could have been sitcom-my opposites like "Dharma & Greg," but director Nigel Cole ("Calendar Girls") and screenwriter Colin Patrick Lynch (in his first script to make it to the screen) never turn them into easy types. It's also refreshing to watch them spend time together without neurotically analyzing what they mean to each other. They just… are.

But this is a romantic comedy, so inevitably you have some conventional trappings of the genre—including the unfortunately nondescript title. As in "When Harry Met Sally…," there's a crucial New Year's Eve party. There are the obligatory meddlesome friends (played by Kathryn Hahn and Ali Larter). And the film climaxes at a wedding, complete with misunderstandings.

Oliver awkwardly serenades Emily in hopes of winning her heart—with Bon Jovi's "I'll Be There For You," a great '80s high-school make-out ballad—but again, that's a scene in the commercials that's played for big laughs.

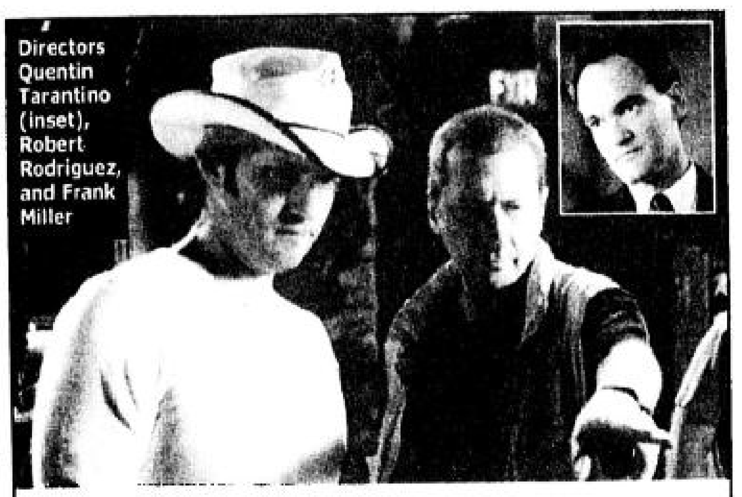
It's actually a poignant moment, much more so than a similar one Kutcher played out in the recent "Guess Who," in which he nervously warbled Lou Rawls' "You'll Never Find Another Love Like Mine."

And it's just another wonderful surprise in a movie that's full of them. *AP*



REVIEW

AMANDA Peet and Ashton Kutcher in "A Lot Like Love." Manila gala premiere is set tonight at SM Megamall; regular screening starts June 1.



Directors Quentin Tarantino (inset), Robert Rodriguez, and Frank Miller

SIN CITY

Visceral triumph of Rodriguez, Tarantino and Miller

To call SIN CITY a visceral triumph barely begins to cover the success **Robert Rodriguez, Quentin Tarantino** and **Frank Miller** have pulled off. Hard edged and hard core this film is an authentic slice of pulp fiction. Miller's stories and characters are clearly inspired by Mickey Spillane or Raymond Chandler.

But Chandler and Spillane were never like this.

Though SIN CITY is a lavishly violent film, it's violence is stylized just like the graphic novels that inspired it. Blood is often depicted as white splashes. Even when it is red, it is a stark red.

Frank Miller's series is already considered a work of art. This is why Rodriguez and Tarantino were wise to partner with Miller in making his panels live and breathe. It's odd to think of things living and breathing when 85 to 90 percent of what's up on screen is created by sophisticated technology.

Co-director Rodriguez, like George Lucas, is a champion of digital cinema and the virtual realities it can create. Unlike Lucas, however, Rodriguez clearly shows how to use this technology for art, not artifice. Every scene of SIN CITY was performed before a green screen with most (if not all) of the sets rendered later. We've seen this type of trick in the recent STAR WARS films. The major difference here is that, after the first jaw dropping minutes of SIN CITY, you actually forget that nothing is real. The CG rarely calls attention to itself as it so often does in the more self conscious work of Mr. Lucas.

SIN CITY led the May weekend boxoffice with a $28.1M debut. **MIRAMAX** is predicting a $100M total North American boxoffice and another $100M from international. • [*by Frank H. Woodward, monstersandcritics.com*] ADVT.

Docu on The Who tells all

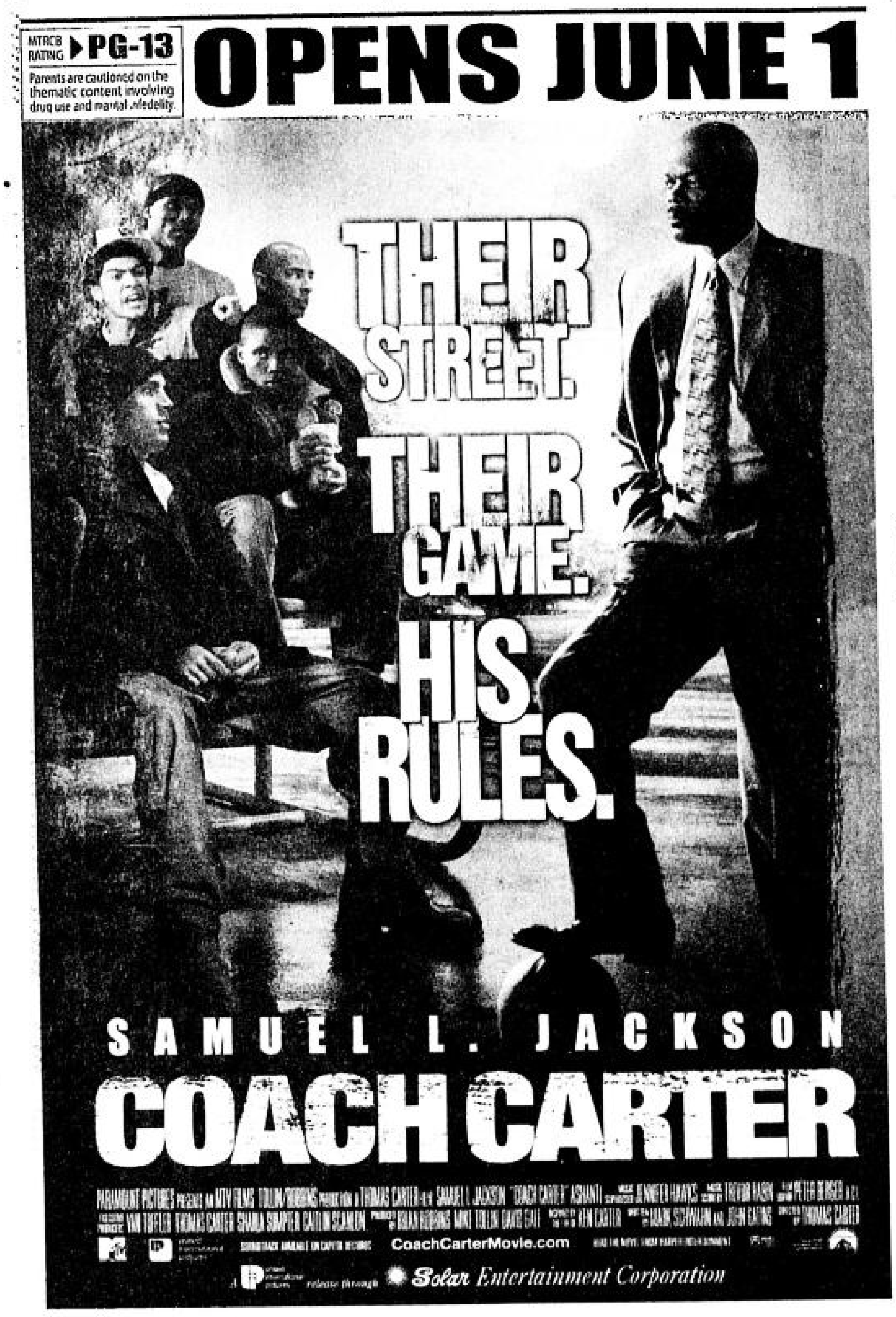
LOS ANGELES—The two surviving members of The Who are producing a documentary about the British rock band's turbulent history, an ongoing 40-year saga of death, drugs and timeless music.

Guitarist/songwriter Pete Townshend and singer Roger Daltrey have joined forces on the feature-length project with director Murray Lerner, an Oscar-winning documentary director who first filmed the band during the 1970 Isle of Wight festival.

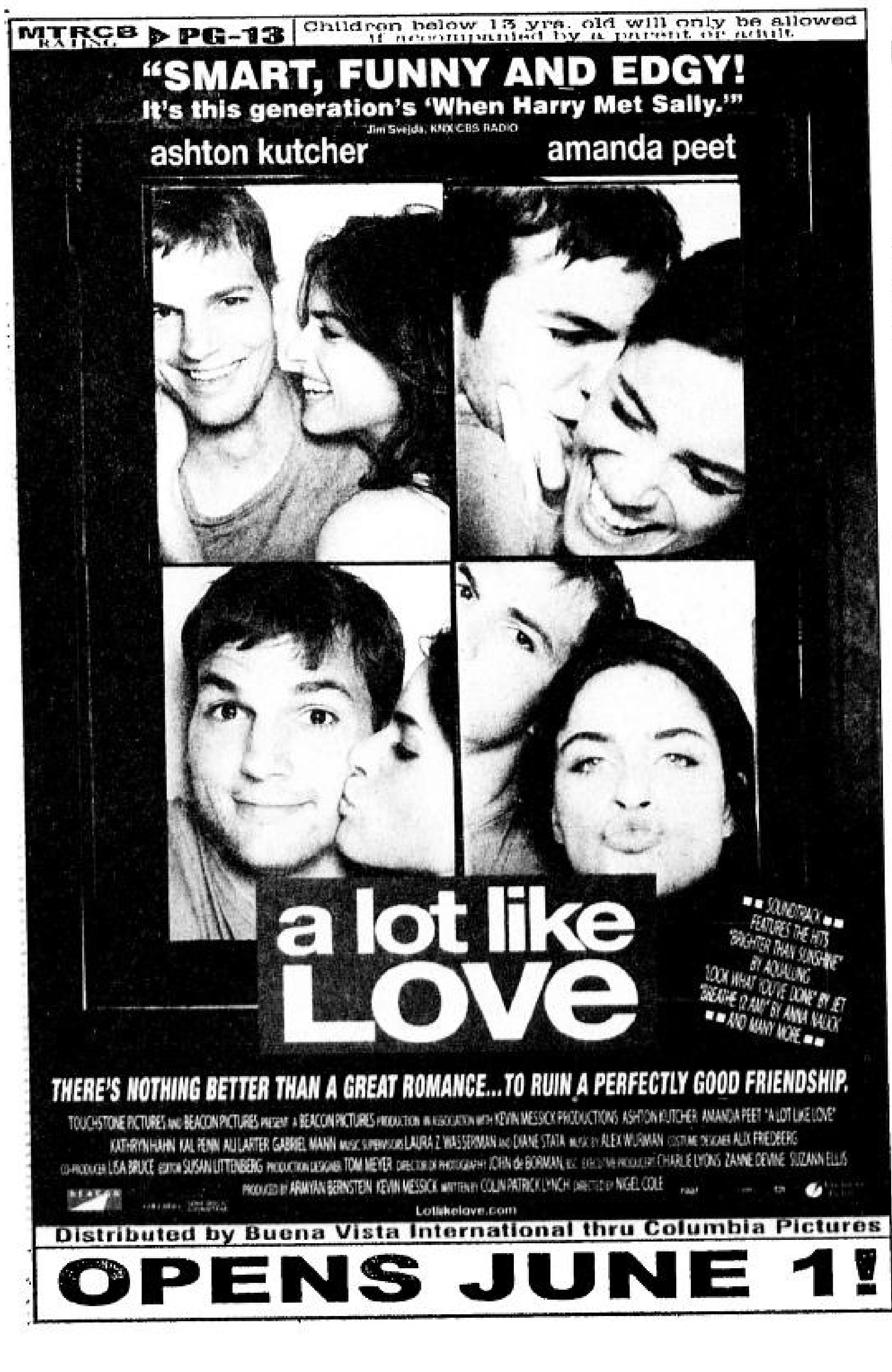
Tentatively titled "My Generation: Who's Still Who"—a reference to their breakthrough 1965 hit "My Generation"—the film is scheduled to come out next year. Lerner said there are plans for a theatrical release, a CD and a multi-disc DVD set.

"There will be very unusual stuff," Lerner told Reuters. "We're looking for material like fights between them, on and off the stage, unruly fans that make it difficult, weird incidents on the stage, interviews with ex-wives and girlfriends." To that end, the filmmakers have set up a website, http://www.thewhomovie.com, seeking material from fans.

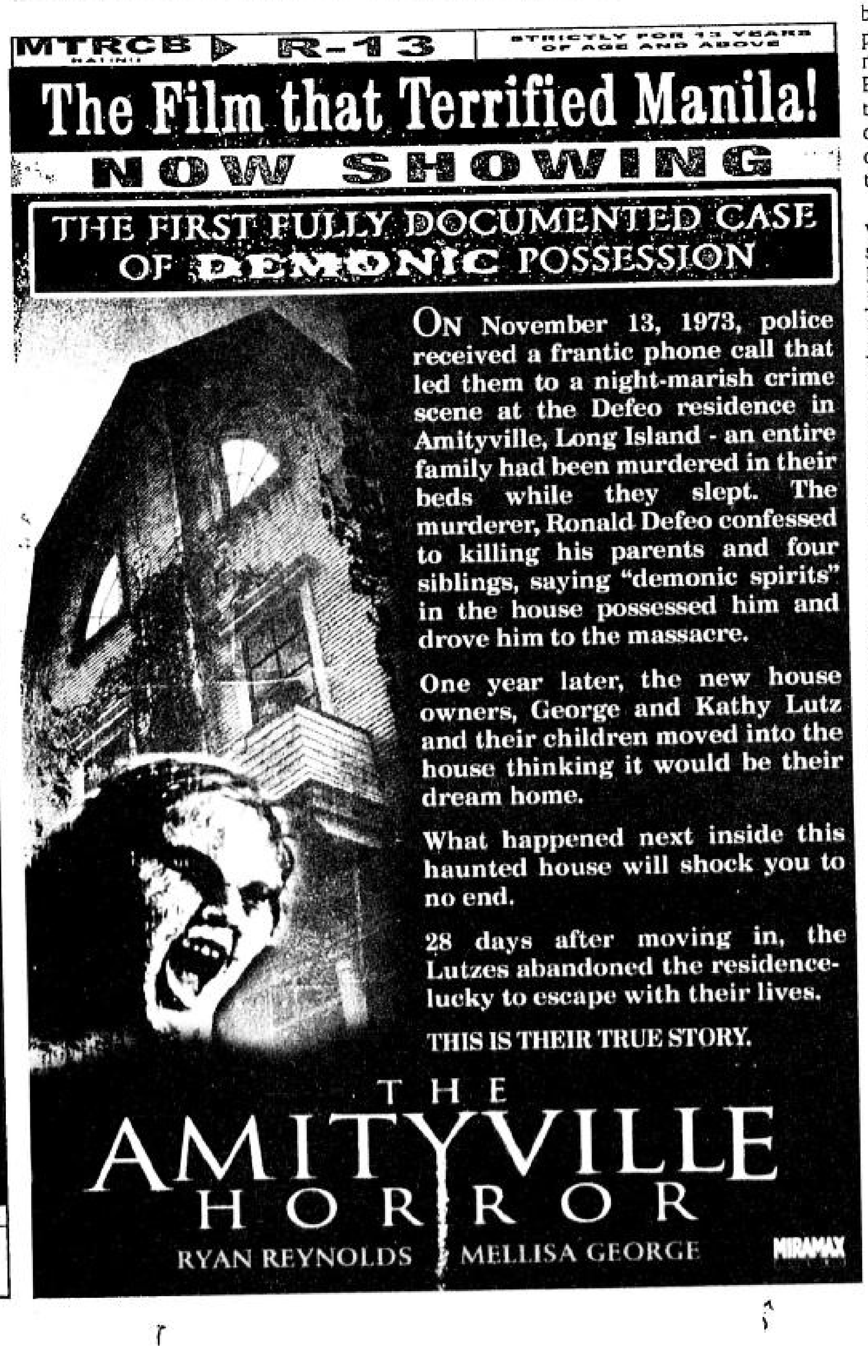
Reuters



MTRCB RATING ▸PG-13
Parents are cautioned on the thematic content involving drug use and marital infidelity.
OPENS JUNE 1
THEIR STREET.
THEIR GAME.
HIS RULES.
SAMUEL L. JACKSON
COACH CARTER
CoachCarterMovie.com
A release through Solar Entertainment Corporation



MTRCB RATING ▸PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult.
"SMART, FUNNY AND EDGY! It's this generation's 'When Harry Met Sally.'"
Jim Svejda, KNX/CBS RADIO
ashton kutcher
amanda peet
a lot like Love
SOUNDTRACK FEATURES THE HITS "BRIGHTER THAN SUNSHINE" BY AQUALUNG "LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE" BY JET "BREATHE (2 AM)" BY ANNA NALICK AND MANY MORE
THERE'S NOTHING BETTER THAN A GREAT ROMANCE…TO RUIN A PERFECTLY GOOD FRIENDSHIP.
TOUCHSTONE PICTURES AND BEACON PICTURES PRESENT A BEACON PICTURES PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH KEVIN MESSICK PRODUCTIONS ASHTON KUTCHER AMANDA PEET "A LOT LIKE LOVE" KATHRYN HAHN KAL PENN ALI LARTER GABRIEL MANN MUSIC SUPERVISORS LAURA Z. WASSERMAN AND DIANE STATA MUSIC BY ALEX WURMAN COSTUME DESIGNER ALIX FRIEDBERG CO-PRODUCER LISA BRUCE EDITOR SUSAN LITTENBERG PRODUCTION DESIGNER TOM MEYER DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY JOHN de BORMAN, B.S.C. EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS CHARLIE LYONS ZANNE DEVINE SUZANN ELLIS PRODUCED BY ARMYAN BERNSTEIN KEVIN MESSICK WRITTEN BY COLIN PATRICK LYNCH DIRECTED BY NIGEL COLE
Lotlikelove.com
Distributed by Buena Vista International thru Columbia Pictures
OPENS JUNE 1!



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The Film that Terrified Manila!
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THE FIRST FULLY DOCUMENTED CASE OF DEMONIC POSSESSION
ON November 13, 1973, police received a frantic phone call that led them to a night-marish crime scene at the Defeo residence in Amityville, Long Island - an entire family had been murdered in their beds while they slept. The murderer, Ronald Defeo confessed to killing his parents and four siblings, saying "demonic spirits" in the house possessed him and drove him to the massacre.
One year later, the new house owners, George and Kathy Lutz and their children moved into the house thinking it would be their dream home.
What happened next inside this haunted house will shock you to no end.
28 days after moving in, the Lutzes abandoned the residence-lucky to escape with their lives.
THIS IS THEIR TRUE STORY.
THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
RYAN REYNOLDS MELLISA GEORGE
MIRAMAX

MAN of many hats... and caps.

KC Montero, Mr. Practical

From page A2-8

side, a little bow tie."

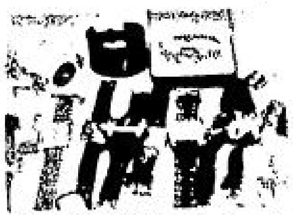
Jackets

"This corduroy jacket belongs to an older brother. It's from Gap; I adopted it. My brother doesn't know where it is. When he reads about it, he will know.

"I have something from Paul Smith that doesn't fit me anymore, a really casual thing that I wear with jeans. I just like it.

"I keep the soccer sweaters I got from New York. These are also my brother's. I like the colors, and I've always wanted to play soccer. I sweat a lot wearing them, but they look good on TV.

"If you buy one, make sure it's not too tight. You're supposed to be casual and feel comfortable. If you want one that's kind of expensive, make sure you can wear it for many different occasions."



EXPENSIVE? Look closely.

Hats

"One of my favorites is the fedora hat that Geneva and I bought in London. This is rare.

"The military hat is also interesting. I got it from an American Air Force Base in Japan.

"I also have baseball caps from Tribal Gear. They're kind of new. I like the way they fit, especially the black one (tries it on).

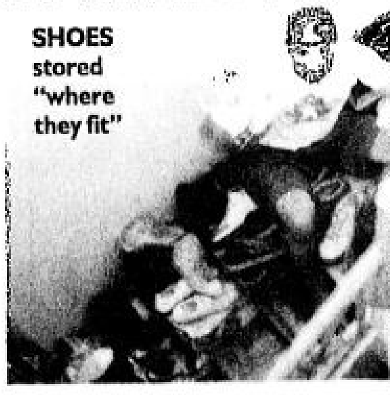
SMALL suit, western-made jeans

(Gen: "The brown hat was your favorite for a while.")

"It's called a trucker cap. I've retired it. It passed away a year ago.

"If you're a dirty (sweaty) boy like me, try not to get white caps. If you plan to buy hats, remember: Some hats just don't fit right. Some tend to get a little bulgy on top. (demonstrates with an ill-fitting cap). I prefer those that are form fitting and those that have no bands on the back. Most trucker hats have them, to adjust the fit. But when you wear the cap backwards, it looks funny.

"I started collecting when I was 11. Now, I don't have that much hair so the hats become my hair. I used to have probably over a thousand hats; I throw them a lot at people, or give them away. I don't want to, but people ask for them, and I'm a sucker."



SHOES stored "where they fit"

Jeans

"I own a lot of jeans. My favorite would have to be the Abercrombie . . . because they're big.

"What I'm wearing right now is from Tribal Gear. The Tribal guys are my friends, so they make me jeans to fit. I'm not the normal-size Pinoy.

Bags

"This maroon Lacoste bag is my favorite. It looked really nice when Geneva bought it. I don't really carry bags . . . not even wallets. I put everything in this small bag which I call a man purse.

"Gen wanted to buy me a Louis Vuitton purse, but I said, 'No way.' It costs more or less P260,000. I don't need that. I opted to buy a laptop instead."

"JERSEYS make me sweat, but they look good."

CHEER FACTOR

'Wish I was 79 again'

LOS ANGELES—"I wish I was 79 again," quips Paul Newman, who turned 80 in January.

He's far from being retired. His food company, Newman's Own, has donated $200 million in lifetime profits to charity. He supports the Hole in the Wall Camps, which provide outdoor vacations for terminally ill children (the name comes from the "Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid" hideout). He owns an auto racing team that will compete this year in Australia, South Korea and Argentina.

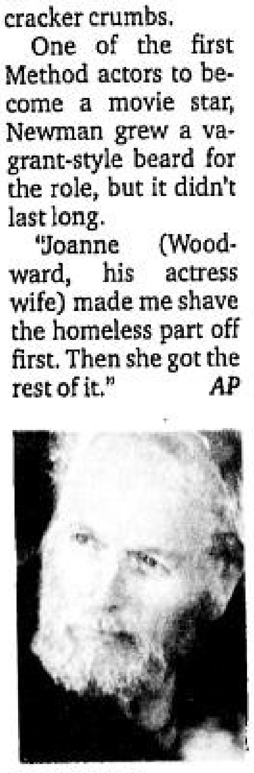
HBO film

And oh yes, Newman is still doing what he does best—acting. He appeared on the US HBO cable TV network on Saturday and Sunday (yesterday and today in Manila) in "Empire Falls," a film based on the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel by Richard Russo, who also wrote the script.

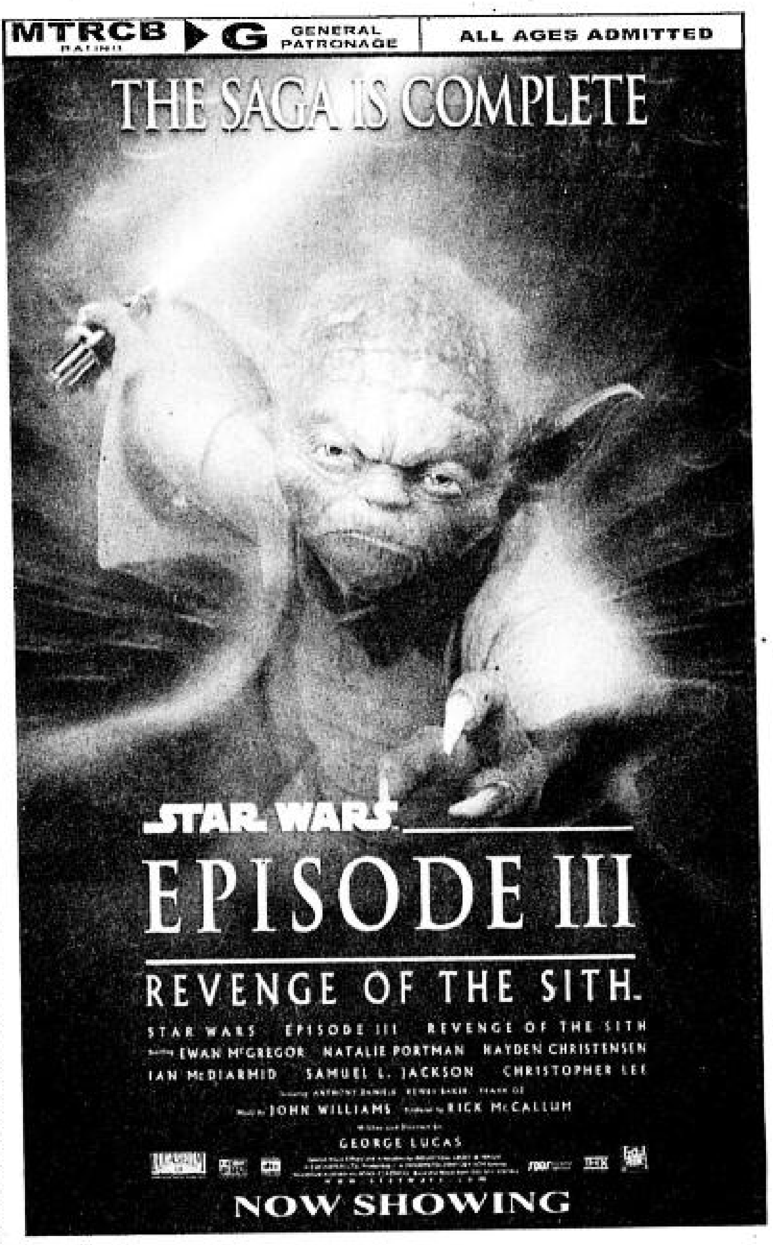
Newman plays Max Roby, a wily patriarch whose unkempt beard is reputed to be littered with cracker crumbs.

One of the first Method actors to become a movie star, Newman grew a vagrant-style beard for the role, but it didn't last long.

"Joanne (Woodward, his actress wife) made me shave the homeless part off first. Then she got the rest of it." *AP*



NEWMAN AP


MTRCB RATING ▶ G GENERAL PATRONAGE
ALL AGES ADMITTED
THE SAGA IS COMPLETE
STAR WARS
EPISODE III
REVENGE OF THE SITH.
STAR WARS EPISODE III REVENGE OF THE SITH
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IAN McDIARMID SAMUEL L. JACKSON CHRISTOPHER LEE
JOHN WILLIAMS RICK McCALLUM
GEORGE LUCAS
NOW SHOWING

NOW SHOWING
BEN STILLER CHRIS ROCK DAVID SCHWIMMER JADA PINKETT SMITH
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DIRECTED BY ROBERT RODRIGUEZ FRANK MILLER QUENTIN TARANTINO
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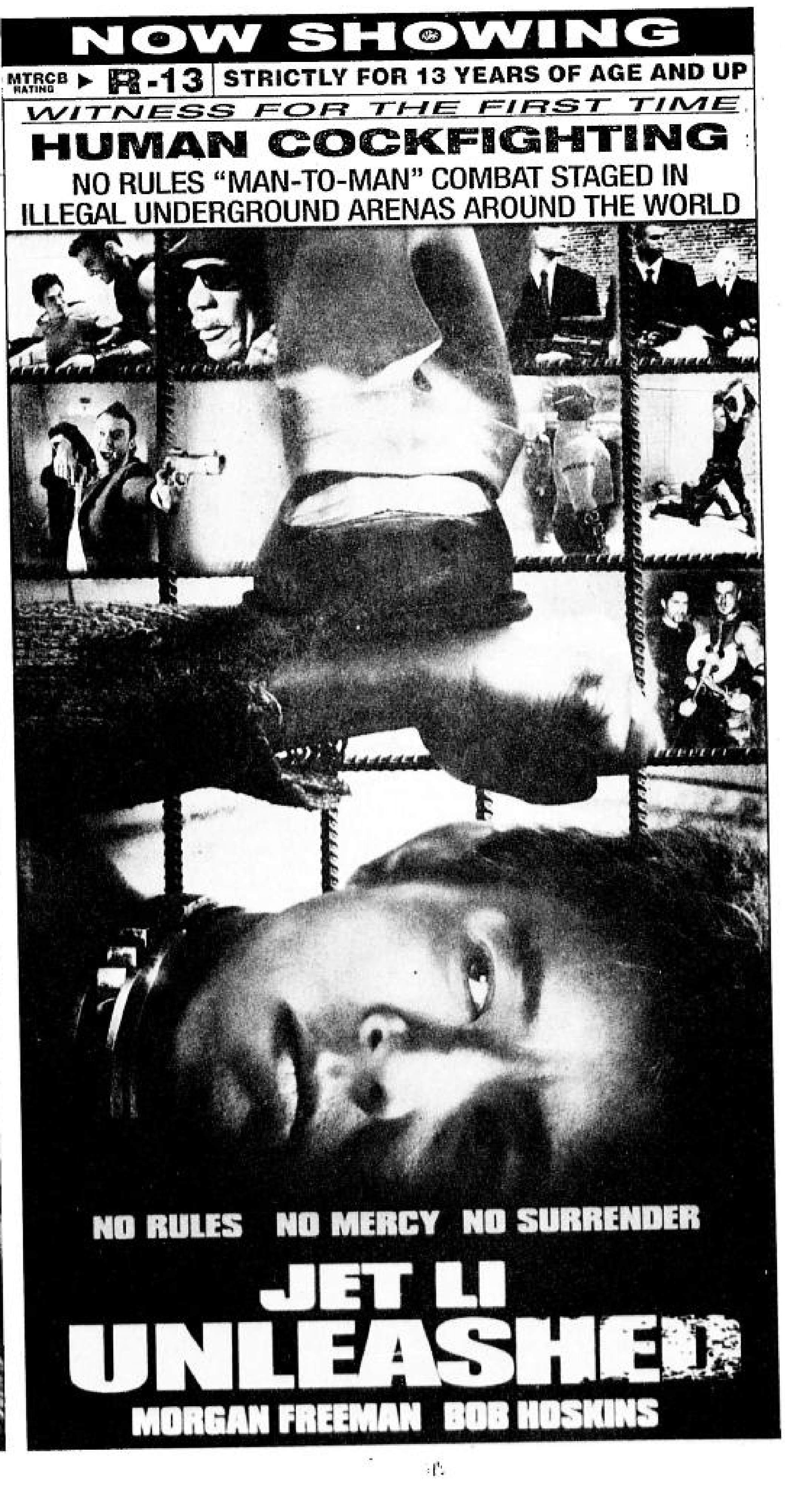
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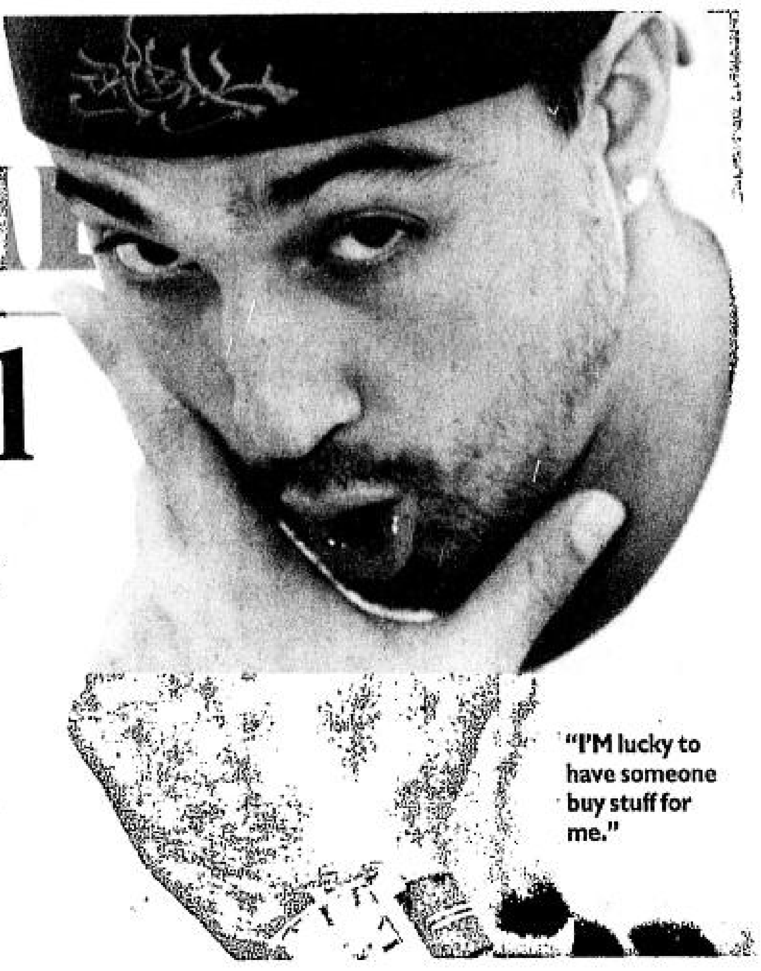
WITNESS FOR THE FIRST TIME
HUMAN COCKFIGHTING
NO RULES "MAN-TO-MAN" COMBAT STAGED IN ILLEGAL UNDERGROUND ARENAS AROUND THE WORLD
NO RULES NO MERCY NO SURRENDER
JET LI
UNLEASHED
MORGAN FREEMAN BOB HOSKINS

KC Montero, Mr. Practical

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Jim Guiao Punzalan



"I'M lucky to have someone buy stuff for me."

OUT OF THE CLOSET

"I DON'T buy a lot of things for myself [and] I don't ask for them. I'm just lucky to have someone buy them for me," said MTV video jock KC Montero.

KC was referring to long-time girlfriend, singer Geneva Cruz, who just recently bought him a half-dozen striped shirts. He liked stripes, he said, "because I can wear them with anything—shorts, jeans or slacks."

But unlike Gen, whose things are neatly arranged in a closet just outside the master bedroom of the couple's three-story home in Quezon City, KC's things are in one of his closets in the bedroom or in a few more closets inside the adjoining bathroom. His shoes are stored "wherever they fit." This could mean in yet another closet, or lining the stairway, or crowding his brother's closet in another room.

"I wish I could remember where they are," KC told INQUIRER Entertainment during a recent visit. "[But] I'm the master of losing things. I even lost the Omega watch that Gen gave me. She got really mad."

"KC likes casual dressing," noted Gen. "He loves hats and sneakers."

But KC has trouble finding locally made items that fit him well because he is not your "average-size" Pinoy.

"So if I find one item that fits me, even if it's not perfect, I get it," KC pointed out. "I can't be picky. Some of my shoes are size 11. I'm a size 13. My toes go like this (squeezes toes together)."

Once, KC had to cut out the heel of a three-month-old pair of Nike Michael Jordan rubber shoes to make them fit, transforming them into "the very first Michael Jordan slippers."

KC added: "I'm more of a hat guy . . . but now that I think about it, I really do like shoes."

Shoes

"Everybody should have white sneakers. They go with everything. My newest is a pair of Michael Jordans.

"My Nike Vince Carter paid is the newest addition to the Montero family (laughs). It cost me P6,000, and it doesn't even fit me snugly.

"Converse Chuck Taylors are also my favorite. You can wear them with anything—even with a suit—and be cute. The uglier and dirtier a pair of Converse gets, the cooler they look.

"I also own a pair of Aldos that I wore at the VMAs (Video Music Awards). I don't think they sell them here. I bought this in London. I can't find leather shoes here for me.

"I haven't worn anything formal for a really long time, but I own a pair of Italian leather shoes. I also own a pair of what I call mobster shoes—this is probably six years old now—from Florsheim."

Accessories

"I've never been a watch guy, or a jewelry guy. But I have to buy some because of work. (KC is also a Sunday noontime variety show host.)

"I acquired some things, but lost most of them. I used to have a collection three times bigger than this one. Most of these watches came from L Time Studio, like these Kenneth Cole Reaction watches, and a Fossil timepiece. I also have a Diesel watch somewhere here.

"Tribal Gear gave me a necklace as a present. But my favorite necklace is a simple dog tag, which I stole from a friend.

(Gen reproaches him: "I don't think it's good to say you stole it.")

"All right, I borrowed it forever from my friend. He got them from Quiapo. What I plan to do is get dog tags and then put gold and diamonds around them.

"Gen bought this pendant for me. The M stands for Montero. This is white gold, and these are real diamonds. One of my friends made it for us. It's kind of expensive. This used to look like an apple. We had it fixed. Now, it's a shamrock. I'm part Irish.

"Gen got this buckle right here (a silver buckle with his name, KC, on it) in New York.

"If you look at these watches from afar, you would say they're genuine Jacob the Jewel watches that go for $3,000 to $8,000. But look at them closely and you'll see that they cost me a total of $8 (laughs). I got them in New York at $5 apiece. Oh no, now everyone will know I wear fakes!"

Tops

"The shirts laid out on my bed are my favorites. No stories behind them. I just like them because they're striped. I usually get shirts from Celio. They have big sizes there. I'm an XL in the States, so that's a double XL here.

"These shirts, like those from Celio, are kind of expensive. For me, I'd rather spend a lot of money on a lot of shirts instead of a lot of money on a couple of shirts. Honestly, not to say anything bad about Celio, I can find shirts just like that anywhere else. I was in Van Heusen the other day, and they have a lot of cheaper striped shirts there that look just as good. People don't really look at the back of your shirts to find out where they're from, so get them wherever you can. Be practical, unless you're filthy rich. I'm not there yet, so for now, I'm being practical.

"This white long-sleeved shirt from Tribal Gear is memorable because I wore it when my brother (Troy) and I had our first gig together. I like long-sleeved stuff.

"I've had this red cotton shirt for six years now. I like wearing it; I have no clue why. I just put this on and it feels nice.

"Randy Ortiz made this outfit for me for the MTV Asia Awards in Thailand last February. He made this in just four days (shows a pink long-sleeved shirt with matching brown vest. I felt like a pimp in this, very Miami. I wore it with white pants, something I hadn't done before. And tan shoes. Wow! I sound like a *fashionista*."

"I also like jerseys. I have a couple from my home team, Seattle Sonics. These are for some of my favorite players, like (Rashard) Lewis and (Suzuki) Ichiro. I also have some for our Seattle football team, Hawks."

Suits

"I don't really have that many suits because I don't dress up that often. I like mobster movies, so all of my suits have vests in-

KC MONTERO/ A2-7

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Sy eyes 39% stake in EPCIBank

By Doris C. Dumlao

BANCO de Oro Universal Bank, the banking arm of mall magnate Henry Sy, is raising at least P11 billion to finance two standing offers to acquire a controlling 39-percent stake in Equitable PCI Bank.

In a briefing before BDO's stockholders' meeting Friday, bank president Nestor Tan said the bank was focused on getting a bigger slice of EPCIBank, the third biggest lender in the country, and was not keen on other banks on the auction block such as Philippine National Bank.

BDO has made an offer to acquire the 29-percent stake held by the state-owned Social Security System and, only recently, another 10 percent held by EBC Investments Inc.

The price offered to EBC Investments was P43.50 or a 10-percent premium over the weighted average share price of EPCIBank common shares as sold over the PSE over a period to be mutually agreed upon.

It was the same price earlier agreed upon with the SSS until closing of the deal was blocked by a group of retirees who were pushing for a public bidding of pension fund's stake.

"We are already in Equitable PCI. If the Supreme Court decides that it's a valid transaction, it has to be completed. It's an unfinished business," he said.

Tan said BDO was setting aside P8 billion in cash for the SSS stake and another P3 billion for the EBC Investments holdings.

"We're looking at not solely the bank [funding the acquisition], but a combination with the SM group. From the bank's side, it will be funded by equity and debt issue and we'll have very good support from minority shareholders. IFC [International Finance Corp.], I think, will be there," Tan said.

He said BDO was only awaiting a decision from the court on whether it could push through with the deal with SSS, whose 29-percent stake is the single biggest block in the bank.

Asked about the chances of EBC Investments accepting its offer given the hostility by some EPCIBank shareholders to BDO's entry in the bank, Tan said: "I don't know. We sent them two letters and we think our offer is quite firm."

SY EYES/ B5

WHAT'S INSIDE

First Pacific to pursue takeover of Skyway project /B5

Filinvest bullish on Cebu, to invest P5B in resort deal /B6

No Free Lunch
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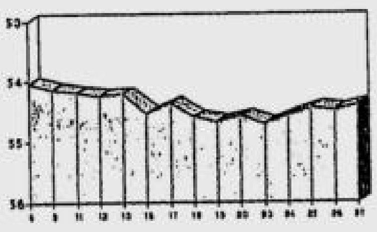
INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



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As of 5 p.m., May 27, 2005

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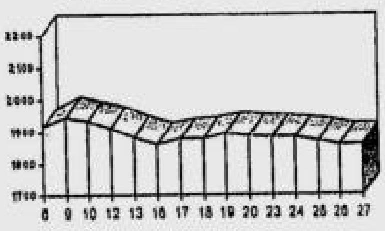
As of 5 p.m., May 27, 2005

GOLD: $418.30-418.80

per ounce Hong Kong, May 27, 2005

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B6)

Window-dressing seen lifting stocks

WINDOW-DRESSING as the month ends is expected to pull the market up this week, traders said.

Last week's trading was lethargic, receiving a boost toward the end of the week after Fitch revised its country credit-rating outlook to stable from negative following the enactment of several tax measures to ease the government's budget problems.

Analysts added that opposition to the VAT law, particularly on the provision that grants President Macapagal-Arroyo the power to raise the VAT rate, is not expected to impact heavily on the stock market.

Proof of the market's listlessness, the main index slipped 11.32 points to 1,875.41 last week.

"I think the worst is over for the stock market," said Joey Roxas, president of Eagle Equities Inc. "I think it will be bullish for the first two to three days because of window-dressing."

BPI Trade said in its weekly outlook that stocks which weighed on the market were PLDT, Globe Telecom, BPI, Ginebra San Miguel, Metrobank, SMC (even after it won the bid for Australian dairy firm National Foods Ltd.), ABS-CBN (after it reported a net loss in the first quarter), Ayala Corp. and ICTSI.

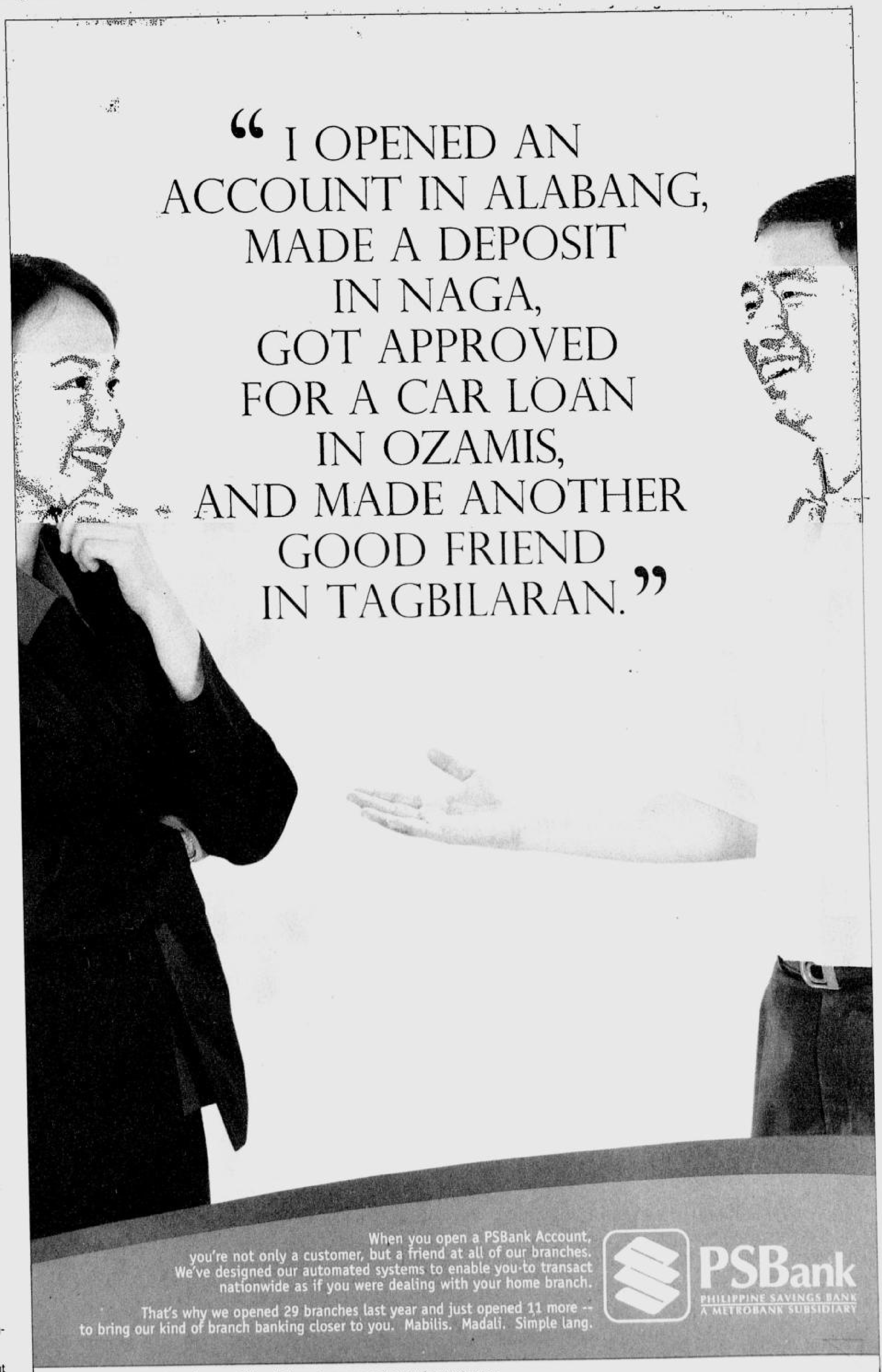
Those which managed to gain were Jollibee, Equitable PCI, Ayala Land Inc., Aboitiz Equity Ventures, Ionics, Megaworld, Filinvest Land and Belle Corp.

"The market opened weak and traded lower due to the absence of positive news to spur buying interest. Also weighing on the market was the political uncertainty when members of the First Family were linked to *jueteng* operations by some members of the opposition and media," BPI Trade said.

"However, statements made by Archbishop Cruz which clarified that he did not have proof linking President Arroyo or her husband to jueteng helped ease the tension. But the Senate inquiry is about to start on Monday, May 30 and investors will be closely monitoring the testimonies and see how the story will unravel," it said.

BPI Trade also said investors are likely to stay cautious this week.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez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Mindanao ports: Show windows of trade, investments

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

FOR AN ARCHIPELAGO like the Philippines, seaports play a crucial role in economic development.

The country's seaports, however, are largely underdeveloped, underutilized, and in need of major rehabilitation. Also, our ports are confronted by age-old problems such as high tariff rates, poor passenger service, and inefficient cargo handling facilities.

Integrated approach, paradigm shift

But development planners said addressing these issues could not be done on a piecemeal basis. Rather, there is need for a paradigm shift emphasizing a holistic and more integrated approach to port planning and development.

A port sustainability conference, attended by port officials of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and local government officials, provided participants the chance to discuss crucial issues affecting the performance of local ports and to formulate corresponding strategies to address them.

Vicente Gambito, a port institutional specialist of the University of Asia and the Pacific (UAP), said the impact of port operations was always on the local economy. Thus, local government units (LGU) and the private sector should have greater participation in any port development in their areas.

Ports should be viewed not only as a critical entry point for investments, but more importantly, as catalysts for growth that will enhance the economic competitiveness of rural communities as envisioned by Executive Orders 170 and 70-A.

Ro-ro, catalyst for development

EO 170 establishes the policy framework for the roll-on, roll-off system which allows the loading into and unloading of self-powered vehicles from cargo vessel.

It encourages greater local government and private sector participation and investment in the development of the national government's roll-on, roll-off transport system (RRTS).

Traders believe RRTS will help agri-fisheries modernization and food programs.

RRTS aims to reduce, if not eliminate, cargo handling and wharfage fees that are imposed by cargo handling operators and port agencies.

Data show that the country's inefficient logistics system has resulted in the wastage of at least 30 percent of rice harvest from Mindanao, 13 percent of corn, 32 percent of fruits and 42 percent of vegetables. This means loss of income for farmers.

The RRTS can play a major role in ARMM's overall economic growth considering its archipelagic make-up and vast potential for trade and investment. This is because a majority of the region's traders rely on water transport as the primary means of moving their goods to markets.

If efficiently utilized, the RRTS can significantly reduce freight and cargo handling costs, minimize pilferage and damage of goods, and ensure the timely delivery of cargoes.

Key issues

Among the key issues raised during the port sustainability conference were: inadequate port facilities such as cargo handling equipment, passenger terminal buildings and cargo area; crowded port areas and lack of staging/marshalling area for ro-ro users; and limited capability of access roads leading from production areas to ports.

Port officials also complained there were no *plantilla* (regular) positions for key personnel and the current salary scale for ARMM port employees is too low. Also raised were concerns over port revenue collections and remittances due to the lack of proper accounting procedures on the part of ARMM Regional Port Management Authority .

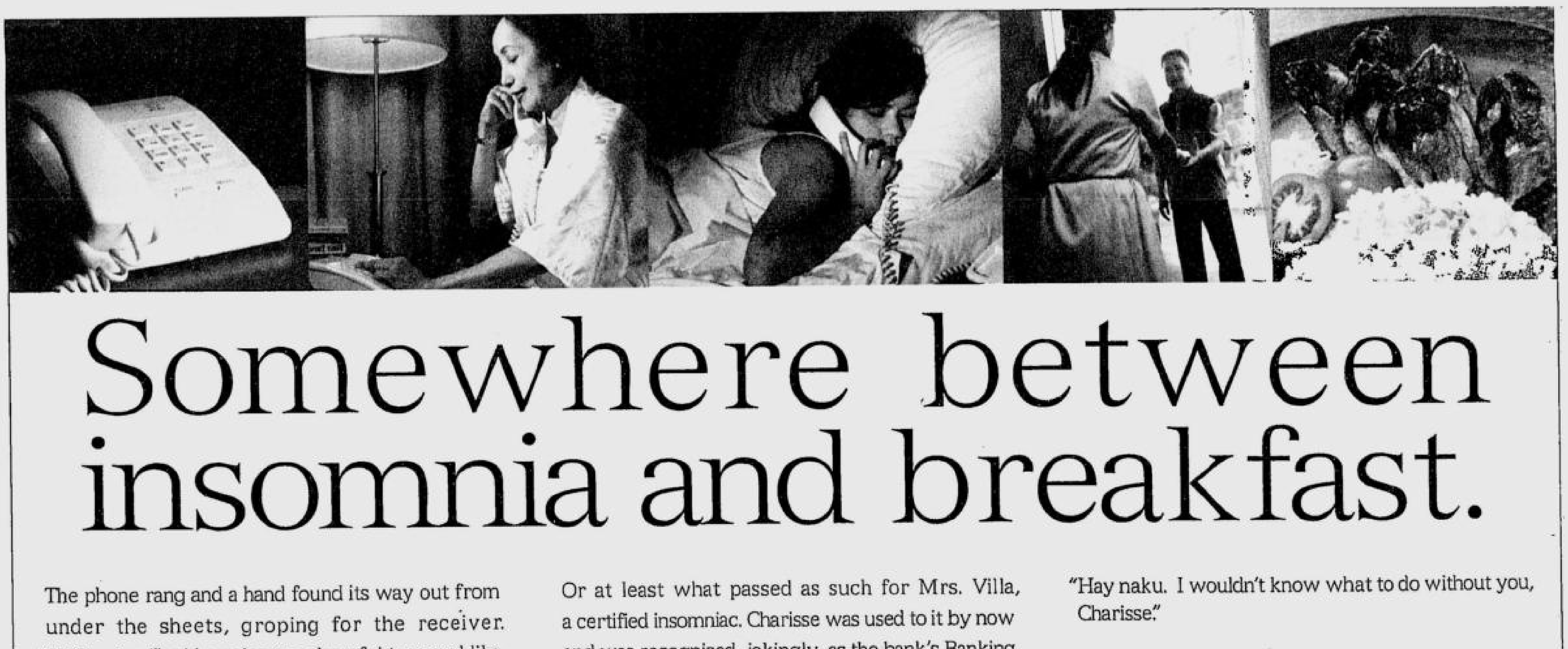
To address the said issues, conference participants submitted the following recommendations: for the ARMM Regional Legislative Assembly to come up with a legislation that will define the roles and responsibilities of the RPMA and LGUs; LGUs need to invest in port facilities, allocate funds for port improvements, and undertake development projects in areas within and outside the port facility; and for the RPMA to operationalize a standard bookkeeping and accounting system in all ARMM Ports.

Upgrading of ports

In a bid to enhance the competitiveness of ARMM ports, the USAID-GEM (Growth with Equity in Mindanao) in partnership with the Mindanao Economic Development Council (Medco), is upgrading strategic ports in the region. These include Bongao Port, Tawi-Tawi; Lamitan Port, Basilan, and Siasi Port, Sulu. The ports of Siocon in Zamboanga del Norte; Maimbung Wharf in Sulu; and Maluso Port in Basilan.

I fully agree with my friend, Caloy Tan, GEM deputy program manager, when he said, "Mindanao needs to demonstrate its ports are now open for business."

Email comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com



Somewhere between insomnia and breakfast.

The phone rang and a hand found its way out from under the sheets, groping for the receiver. "Hi Charisse!" said a voice too cheerful to sound like 4AM. Charisse cleared her throat underneath the pillow and put on her smiley voice. "Good morning Mrs. Villa. How may I help you?"

For the next twenty minutes, Mrs. Villa discussed her finances, the status of her accounts, the latest rates, how her portfolio was doing. Charisse, wide awake now, jotted down notes, and responded equally quick. "Yes, Mrs. Villa. Of course we'll do that." Or alternately "I'll get back to you on that as soon as I check some figures."

It wasn't some emergency financial crisis that was being put to rest here. Or the whim of some obsessive-compulsive business mogul. It was just a normal bank transaction.

Or at least what passed as such for Mrs. Villa, a certified insomniac. Charisse was used to it by now and was recognized, jokingly, as the bank's Banking In Bed specialist. And in some strange way, had grown to like the early morning talks. It got her up early. And always gave her time for breakfast.

"Oh, and Charisse, I have no idea where to find a prom date for Julie. Do you think you could help me out with that, too?"

"Julie's a pretty girl, Mrs. Villa. I'd worry more about her dress than her date."

"You're right of course. Did you get the instructions I left yesterday? The one about the time deposit?"

"Yes ma'am. Our messenger picked it up first thing yesterday."

"Hay naku. I wouldn't know what to do without you, Charisse."

"It's no problem at all, Mrs. Villa. No problem at all." The conversation had wound down to stretch marks and the quest for wrinkle prevention when a stifled yawn came from Mrs. Villa's end of the line.

"Sounds like you need to get some rest, Mrs. Villa. And I need to start getting ready for work anyway."

"Of course.. Sorry I talk so much. You have a good day, Charisse. Good morning!"

"And good night to you, Mrs. Villa."

Charisse stretched, smiled, and figured it would be a sinangag and danggit kind of day.

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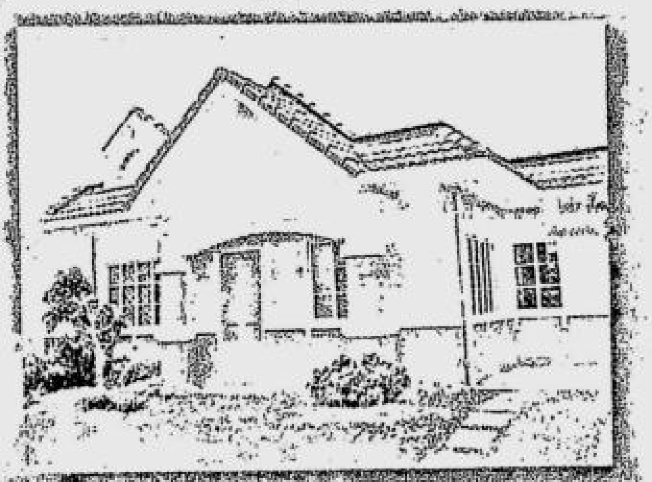

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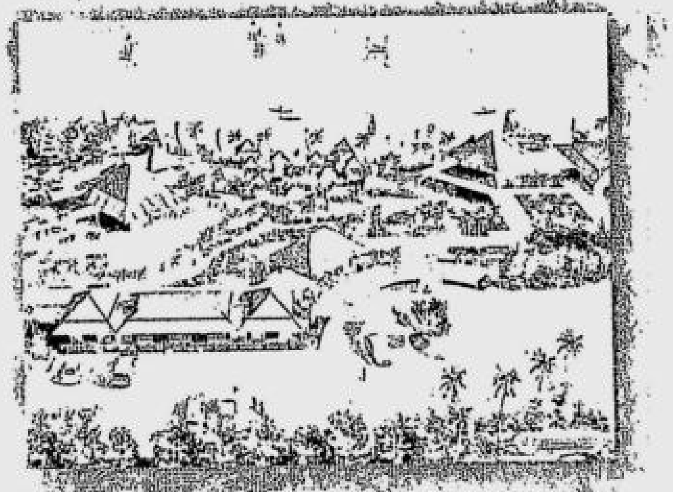

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Semirara sees profit of ₱3.6B in 2005

By Christine A. Gaylican

DESPITE the decline in coal sales during the first four months, Semirara Mining Corp. still expects to end the year with a P3.6-billion profit.

Semirara Mining, owned and controlled by the DMCI Holdings Inc., said it would not be adversely affected by the prolonged closure of the Calaca power facility run by the National Power Corp.—one of its biggest customers—as it was benefiting from higher coal prices in the world market.

Semirara Chief Finance Officer Nestor D. Dadivas told shareholders during its annual stockholders meeting last week that coal prices now average at P1,300 a metric ton, compared to P900 last year.

"Our strong customer base, which is no longer hedged on a single large buyer like Napocor, would allow us to end the year with sufficient earnings," Dadivas said.

He noted that Semirara has also entered into supply contracts with PNOC Exploration Corp., Toledo Power and Apo Cement Corp., which would help the company sell an estimated 3.46 million metric tons of coal this year.

Dadivas added that Semi

SEMIRARA/ B6

Inflation management and biased textbooks

No Free Lunch

Cielito F. Habito

HAS THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) been remiss in not using monetary policy more aggressively to combat inflation, now surging at an annual rate of 8.5 percent?

This was the contention made by a reader whose views were expounded in last week's column. His arguments were two-fold: One, attributing our surging inflation mainly to supply-side factors, particularly oil prices, is questionable—especially in light of the massive election spending by the government last year; and two, even if the rise in inflation were supply-induced, BSP should still use monetary policy (i.e. restrict money supply growth) to fight it more actively, the way the US and Thailand central banks have been doing.

As one would expect, the BSP would not take such criticism sitting down. Thus, I have become the mediator to an interesting off-line debate on our government's management of inflation.

Allow me to share with you some of the points raised by readers, including the BSP itself.

BSP's side

My esteemed friend BSP Assistant Governor Diwa Guinigundo wrote in, arguing four main points: One, the US Federal Reserve Bank and the Bank of Thailand have both been cutting interest rates to fight inflation that is induced more by demand pressures, not by oil price rises.

Two, it is not true, as my reader contends, that the Philippines has had excess liquidity (translation: too much money in circulation) and an expansionary monetary policy in past months. Three, our inflation rate is higher than that of our neighbors in spite of oil price increases affecting everyone around because of peculiar features of the Philippine economy.

Four, election spending was actually not a significant factor in the surge in our inflation.

Guinigundo points out that the US and Thailand moves to raise interest rates (i.e. reduce money supply) were designed to stem demand pressures evidenced, among other things, by their much lower unemployment rates than our 11.3 percent (5.2 percent for the US and 2.1 percent for Thailand).

He also cites the rise in capacity utilization in these countries beyond their record levels of 79.4 and 75.5 percent, respectively.

Thus, it is not right to perceive their central banks as using monetary policy to combat supply-induced inflation; it is demand-induced inflation they are fighting.

That banks have had heavy demand for government securities should not be taken as a sign of excess liquidity, Guinigundo further argues.

He asserts: "This is so, not because there is excess liquidity, but because the banks have not been lending to the market nor have they been participating as much in the foreign exchange market in the face of strengthening domestic currency. Total domestic liquidity growth has been single digit since 2000. Only in the first two months of 2005 have we seen again double digit increase in the money supply. One can hardly characterize monetary policy as expansionary."

Structurally different

Guinigundo asserts that oil price hikes are more inflationary in the Philippines because among other things, we do not subsidize domestic oil prices the way India, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand have done. Besides, Indonesia and Malaysia are net oil exporters unlike the Philippines.

He notes that measures are now being undertaken by oil-subsidizing Asian countries to ease the heavy burden on their government finances. For example, India has announced that it will end oil subsidies in three years, while Thailand removed its price cap on gasoline in October 2004.

Finally, he points out that election spending was not a significant factor in last year's inflation process. Compared to past experience when the monthly inflation rose by an average of one percentage point during Presidential election months, inflation in May 2004 rose by only 0.51 percentage point.

However, inflation trended up sharply starting June 2004 due mainly to the upsurge in world oil prices combined with the supply constraints on selected food items during the year. (My reader retorts that this was exactly his point; i.e. are these really the main culprits for the surge in inflation in the remainder of 2004?)

Another reader supportive of the BSP stance sums up the argument thus: Take cough medicine when you have a cough. Don't take a cold tablet to cure a cough. Use monetary policy to address demand-side inflation and leave the national government to tend to supply-side inflation.

I expect many of those more predisposed to my original reader's viewpoint to readily find holes in my BSP friend's arguments; I will leave that to the offline debate for now.

Politicized textbook

Another concerned reader wrote to express his disgust upon seeing his son's fourth year high school economics textbook, "Economics: Theories and Principles," written by Teofista Vivar, Evelina Viloria, Julia Rillo, Exuferencia Mina, Purificacion Jacob and Julius Espero, published by Vibal Publishing House.

He reports: "I was flabbergasted to note that in Chapter 2 (page 22-23) of the book, under "Economic Highlights of the Administrations:" (1) Under the Aquino administration, the only accomplishment identified was "'The US bases were dismantled;" (2) the Ramos Administration was totally omitted (i.e. as if it never existed at all); and (3) under Estrada's regime 10 economic accomplishments were listed, the most cited under ALL the administrations since

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First Pacific to pursue takeover of Skyway project

By Clarissa S. Batino

HONG Kong-based First Pacific Co. Ltd wants to take control of the Skyway project here in line with the group's continuing interest to expand into the Philippines' infrastructure business, its top official said.

"We are talking with the Indonesians to gain control [of the Skyway project]. They [Indonesians] are amenable," First Pacific managing director Manuel V. Pangilinan said in an interview.

Pangilinan, more popular here as the chair of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., said his company would like to take off from the Skyway project to develop contiguous roads leading to South Luzon provinces.

He said the amount involved would be huge. Last year, Pangilinan said the First Pacific group was willing to invest P5 billion for such a venture.

The Skyway is a 9.3-kilometer elevated highway running from Magallanes to Bicutan.

The First Pacific chief, however, cautioned that things were not as smooth as they should be over at Citra Metro Manila Tollways Corp. (CMMTC), a joint venture of Indonesian firm P.T. Citra Lamtoro Gung Persada and the state-owned Philippine National Construction Corp.

First Pacific's local subsidiary Metro Pacific Corp. owns 10 percent of CMMTC through Metro Strategic Infrastructure Holdings Inc.

Pangilinan said the South Luzon highway project would entail three major capital expenditure items. He said P10 billion would be needed to connect the major arterial highways from Alabang to Calamba and Calamba to Sta. Rosa.

Another P2.5 billion would have to be spent to connect Lipa to the Batangas port, and another investment would be needed to upgrade the existing Skyway.

A Malaysian group that bought a controlling stake in Hopewell Crown Infrastructure Corp. said it would pursue the P10-billion upgrade of the 30-kilometer South Luzon Expressway or SLEX, subject to the approval of PNCC.

Pangilinan said the rehabilitation of the SLEX and its integration with the contiguous road development like the Skyway and the Southern Tagalog Arterial Road or STAR was included in the Macapagal administration's priority infrastructure program.

First Pacific, a company that Pangilinan founded in the early 80s using the capital of Indonesia's Salim clan, had been looking to expand in the region through telecom or food.

GSIS readies sale of ₱12.7B worth of acquired assets

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT Service Insurance System will sell an estimated P12.7 billion worth of its acquired assets, a move aimed at shoring up its social security fund.

GSIS senior vice president and chief operating officer Reynaldo Palmiery said the assets comprise mostly of foreclosed real estate that were used as collateral for various types of loans that had gone sour.

"This [sale of acquired assets] is one thing we will focus on. In the case of some of our big-ticket acquired assets, there are litigation processes involved, but we have plans to dispose them once the legal issues are settled," Palmiery said in a briefing last week.

The official said it decided to embark on an aggressive program to sell its assets to beef up, and thus stretch the life, of its social security fund. GSIS earlier estimated that the actuarial life of its fund stood at 30 years. According to its unaudited 2004 financial statement, its social insurance fund grew by 3.48 percent to P280.68 billion last year from P271.25 billion in 2003.

The asset-disposal move of GSIS, the pension fund covering state employees, will be pursued together with a plan to invest offshore, hoping to achieve substantial growth in income from investments.

Palmiery said that GSIS intends to make its first-ever attempt to invest abroad. The pension fund wants to place some $200 million of its money in various investment instruments overseas, such as in equities and foreign sovereign bonds.

Sy eyes 39% stake …

From page B1

"We'd like to negotiate as soon as possible. The point that some shareholders are not so keen on bringing in BDO, in a way that's true, so our transaction is to buy shares from a willing seller," Tan said.

BDO's takeover of a controlling stake in EPCIBank could make it the biggest banking conglomerate in the country.

The bank currently ranks 7th among the country's biggest with assets of P197.21 billion as of the first quarter, but combining its assets with China Banking Corp. (P120 billion) and BDO Private Bank (P15.43 billion), it would have P332.75 billion worth of assets.

BDO Private Bank is a wholly owned subsidiary of BDO while China Bank is majority owned by the same principal stockholder, Henry Sy.

As a commercial banking group, Sy's bank now ranks third after Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.'s P461 billion and Bank of the Philippine Islands' P386 billion (excluding their respective thrift bank units PSBank and BPI Family Bank).

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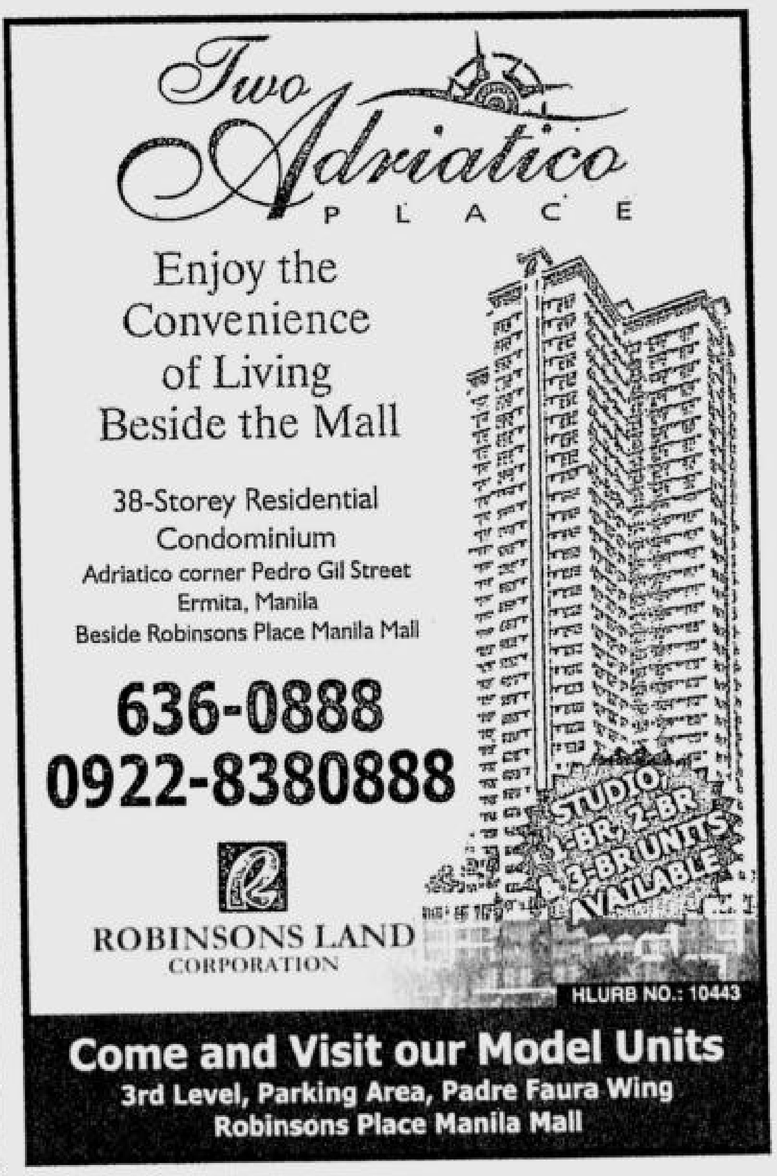
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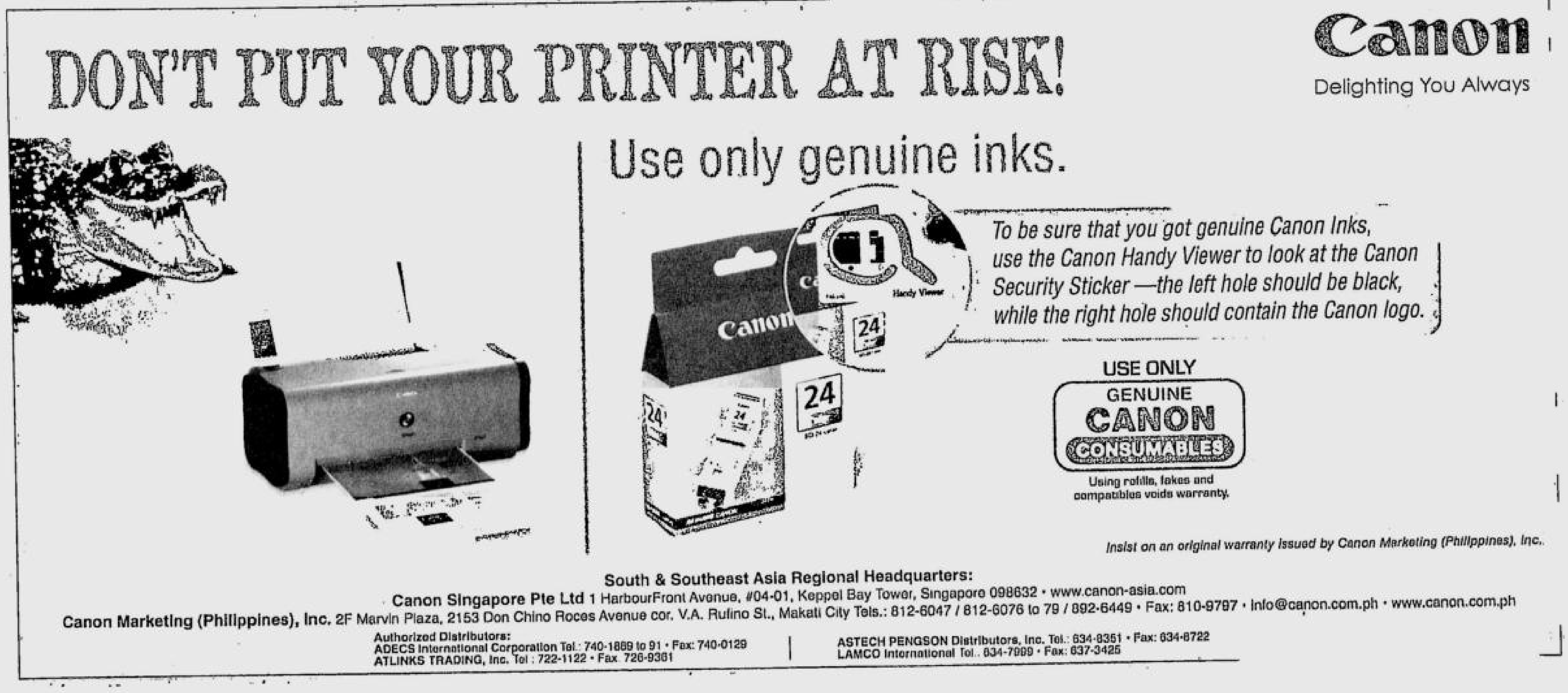
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Filinvest bullish on Cebu, to invest ₱5B in resort deal

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

ENCOURAGED by tourism prospects in Cebu, holding firm Filinvest Development Corp. of the Gotianun family plans to invest more than P5 billion in a beach resort project in Mactan.

FDC president Josephine Yap said the beach club, which will sit on a 12-hectare property owned by FDC, would be launched before the end of the year.

The project, dubbed Samanea, the scientific name for the acacia tree, will house a sports club, residential lots and casitas.

"We are confident that the market will absorb that (project). It will be designed by world class architects. There is quite a strong demand in Cebu ," Yap said.

Yap, who also heads FDC's affiliate Filinvest Alabang Inc., the commercial property arm of the Filinvest Group, said FAI was spending some P3 billion on its own projects this year, which include residential condominiums and offices.

FAI, which also leases information technology buildings, said it has cornered 17 percent of total call center seats through its Northgate Cyberzone and PBCom Tower, which host a combined 7,150 seats.

FAI's Northgate Cyberzone houses the three-storey Convergys building that was opened in August last year.

PCCI withdraws support for OPSF revival

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINE Chamber of Commerce and Industry has withdrawn its support for the reestablishment of the Oil Price Stabilization Fund, saying that the fund would be too much of a strain on government coffers.

PCCI president Donald Dee said that as prices were controlled and regulated during the OPSF regime, implementing the same scheme today would prove difficult because of erratic world oil prices.

"There is no way by which prices could and should be controlled or regulated without resorting to subsidies or mechanisms such as the Oil Price Stabilization Fund, which had already been scrapped and, in the end, proven to be difficult to manage and put undue strain on the government's resources and ability to draw on it when the time came," he said in a statement.

"Being basically import-dependent on oil and oil products, no amount of control on pricing can be effectively achieved by legislation or dictation, specially during a period of constant price or cost movements originating outside the country like today, without temporarily, if not permanently, hurting and damaging both government and private enterprise initiatives in the long run," he added.

He also said the clamor by some quarters to scrap RA 8479, or the Downstream Oil Industry Deregulation Law, was actually misplaced.

He said the law was not to blame for the price increases.

He added that rescinding the law in the middle of the game, when a large number of new oil players had already been enticed to join the industry because of it, would place under question the "government's credibility, stability and sense of political will."

Semirara…

From page B4

rara's finances would be shored up by lower debt servicing costs this year.

The largest coal producer in the country has an estimated EBITDA (earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization) of P4.4 billion against a long-term debt of P2.8 billion.

"The earning per share is at P8 per share and the P/E (price per earnings ratio)is 4.5 percent," Dadivas added.

Last year, majority shareholder DMCI Holdings Inc. sold 30 percent of its shares in Semirara to mostly institutional investors.

Semirara used the proceeds of the public offering to increase the production capacity of its plants to 3.5 million metric tons a year from 2.6 million metric tons to meet rising demand.

After the offering, DMCI's 94.5 percent share in Semirara was cut to 65.6 percent

Semirara corners 92 percent of local coal production, and accounts for 23 percent of supply, with the balance provided by imports.

Semirara was incorporated on Feb. 26, 1980 to explore, develop and mine the coal resources on Semirara Island in Antique.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 27, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.9	7,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	28	29	28	28.5	380,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	48	48	47	48	1,848,900
China Banking Corp.	750	750	750	750	1,460
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	800
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	2,080,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	48.5	49.5	48.5	49.5	71,200
International Exch. Bank	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	104,400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	31	31.5	30	30.5	588,600
Philippine National Bank	33	33	33	33	23,000
Phil. Savings Bank	32	34	32	34	400
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	11.5	11.5	11.5	11.5	21,800
Security Bank Corp.	30	30	30	30	10,800
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
First Metro Invest. Corp.	230	265	221	265	130
Manulife Financial Corp.	2410	2410	2410	2410	70
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	174,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1675	1675	1675	1675	380
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.06	1.06	1.02	1.04	2,607,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	830	835	825	825	54,390
Ipeople Inc.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	11,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	1,800,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	50,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.15	3.2	3.1	3.1	425,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1450	1455	1440	1440	3,340
Philweb Corp.	0.016	0.017	0.016	0.017	121,700,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.5	15.75	15.5	15.5	14,700
Manila Electric Co. B	22.5	22.75	22.5	22.75	116,600
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	7,141,000
Petron Corp.	3.2	3.25	3.2	3.2	1,102,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.16	1.18	1.16	1.18	150,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l.Container Term'l Sv	7.3	7.5	7.3	7.5	23,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.04	1.06	54,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.56	0.6	0.56	0.6	240,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.05	3.05	151,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	191,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	29	29.5	29	29.5	316,400
San Miguel Corp. A	57.5	58.5	57.5	58.5	48,900
San Miguel Corp. B	84	84.5	84	84.5	172,000
Universal Robina Corp.	12.75	13	12.75	13	139,900
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	1,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	1,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.8	6.8	6.6	6.7	2,347,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.85	4.9	4.8	4.85	1,013,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.94	1.94	1.92	1.92	21,000
APC Group Inc.	0.29	0.29	0.28	0.29	260,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	40,000,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.94	0.96	0.94	0.94	5,500,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	90,000
CADP Group Corp.	1	1	1	1	40,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	600,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.44	2.46	2.44	2.46	3,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.26	1.26	20,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	7.9	8	7.7	7.8	466,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	44.5	44.5	44	44.5	107,800
Global Equities Inc.	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	0.0825	100,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.24	1.26	1.24	1.26	375,000
J.G Summit Holdings Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	100,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	100,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	880,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.34	3,460,000
SM Investments Corp.	247	249	247	249	2,315,420
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	1,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.165	0.16	0.165	2,920,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.16	1.18	1.16	1.18	230,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.09	0.0925	3,200,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.125	0.125	0.125	0.125	30,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.12	1.14	1.1	1.12	2,110,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	220,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.24	1.26	1.24	1.24	1,145,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	300,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	12	12	12	12	1,001,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	200
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	5,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.5	7.7	7.5	7.7	5,005,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	300,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.26	810,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.195	0.195	0.19	0.19	900,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	180,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.35	4,300,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.42	1.42	2,998,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	670,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.19	0.19	0.18	0.18	700,000
SM Development Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	5,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.4	7.5	7.4	7.5	2,537,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	8,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.05	4.05	4.05	4.05	21,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. A	0.3	0.3	0.29	0.3	330,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.31	1,800,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	56,400,000
Omico Corp.	0.006	0.0065	0.006	0.0065	770,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	830,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28.5	28.5	28	28.5	1,054,900
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	30,000
OIL					
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.46	2.46	2.46	2.46	10,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.14	0.145	0.14	0.145	3,820,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	130,000

	SHARES	VALUE(P)
Bank & Fin Svc	5,312,940	126,298,670.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	207,572,050	765,654,340.00
PRO	18,405,000	64,099,680.00
Mining	838,465,900	37,556,900.00
OIL	3,960,000	601,100.00
GRAND TOTALS :	1,073,715,890	994,210,690.00

	AVERAGES	
Bank & Fin Svc	549.18	UNCH 0.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	2,948.00	UP 15.59
PRO	706.45	UP 25.44
Mining	2,442.11	UP 63.24
OIL	2.21	DOWN 0.01
SME	100.00	UNCH 0.00
All Shares Index	1,145.21	UP 7.47
Composite	1,875.41	UP 16.69

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May 29, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.799232737	1.000000	54.4550
Japan	Yen	0.007406	0.009266	0.5046
United Kingdom	Pound	1.454684	1.820100	99.1135
Hongkong	Dollar	0.102724	0.128528	6.9990
Switzerland	Franc	0.646576	0.808996	44.0539
Canada	Dollar	0.631455	0.790077	43.0236
Singapore	Dollar	0.481523	0.602482	32.8082
Australia	Dollar	0.607735	0.760398	41.4075
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.120037	2.652590	144.4468
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.213123	0.266660	14.5210
Brunei	Dollar	0.480078	0.600673	32.7096
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000106	0.0058
Thailand	Baht	0.01981	0.024786	1.3497
UAE	Dirham	0.217609	0.272272	14.8266
Euro	Euro	1	1.251200	68.1341
ArgentinaPeso	0.277271	0.346921	18.8916	
Brazil	REAL	0.33177	0.415110	22.6048
Denmark	Kroner	0.134341	0.168087	9.1532
India	Rupee	0.018374	0.022989	1.2519
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.210336	0.263172	14.3310
Mexico	New Peso	0.073033	0.091379	4.9760
New Zealand	Dollar	0.568323	0.711086	38.7222
Norway	Kroner	0.125189	0.156637	8.5297
Pakistan	Rupee	0.01343	0.016804	0.9151
South Africa	Rand	0.121179	0.151619	8.2564
Korea	Won	0.000798	0.000999	0.0544
Sweden	Kroner	0.108689	0.135992	7.4054
Syria	Pound	0.015396	0.019264	1.0490
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025453	0.031847	1.7342
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000372	0.000466	0.0254

No free lunch

From page B4

President Roxas (1946-48).

It doesn't take a history major to see that the authors are politically inclined towards you-know-who. But for them to more-than-subtly reveal their political bias and mislead young minds accordingly is reprehensible, to say the least.

Students ought to have a fair account of the accomplishments of ALL regimes regardless of the authors' political persuasions.

The DepEd really needs to tighten up on the quality control of its textbooks. Such bias, let alone factual errors, has no place in our children's textbooks. Calling Secretary Butch Abad!

Comments welcome at chabito@ateneo.edu.

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Canyon Woods	125,000	-
Capitol Hills	95,000	-
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Celebrity Sports Club	120,000	100,000
Club Filipino	150,000	100,000
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Eagleridge "B"	290,000	-
Eagleridge "C"	290,000	-
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Forest Hills "B"	200,000	180,000
Forest Hills "C"	220,000	-
Makati Sports Club "A"	240,000	190,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	260,000	-
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Manila Golf (Individual)	11,400,000	11,000,000
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Manila Southwoods "B"	700,000	650,000
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Mimosa (Corporate)	-	320,000
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Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	300,000	180,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	170,000	160,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	450,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	150,000	130,000
Spa & Lodge	650,000	600,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,300,000	-
Sta. Elena "B"	1,600,000	1,350,000
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Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	650,000
Tagaytay Midlands	700,000	650,000
The Palms Country Club	670,000	-
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Evercrest	70,000	-
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	130,000/200,000*	-
Luisita Golf	310,000	-
Manila Golf Corporate	11,500,000	-
Manila Golf Individual	11,400,000	-
Manila Polo	2,200,000	2,075,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	400,000	370,000/700,000*
Makati Sports Club	210,000	180,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	120,000/180,000*	150,000
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Mt. Malarayat A/C**	220,000	180,000/300,000**
Orchard A/B*/C**	170,000/320,000*	160,000/270,000*/250,000**
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Eagleridge Golf Club "A"	300K	-
Eagleridge Golf Club "B"	290K	
Eagleridge Golf Club "C"	340K	
Eastridge Golf Club "A"	90K	
Forest Hills (Individual)	100K	
Makati Sports Club "A"	190K	-
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Manila Polo Club		3.15M
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Manila Southwoods "B"		700K
Metro Club "A"	130K	90K
Orchard Golf Club "A"	170K	
Orchard Golf Club "B"	-	280K
Orchard Golf Club "C"		380K
Puerto Azul Beach Club	65K	-
Quezon City Sports Club "A"	180K	
Riviera Golf Club "B"	180K	
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IFC loans to RP up to $105M

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE INTERNATIONAL Finance Corp. (IFC), the private sector arm of the World Bank, is raising its total loans to the Philippines to $105 million by the end of June to support infrastructure and financial sector projects, country head Vipul Bhagat said.

The amount is 15 percent higher than the year-ago level.

Bhagat said the IFC would sign a $29-million loan agreement this week with a special purpose vehicle (SPV) led by Deutsche Bank Real Estate Global Opportunities Fund IB and the National Housing Mortgage Finance Corp. (NHMFC).

IFC, together with the Asian Development Bank, will provide a total loan of $58 million to the SPV.

The NHMFC earlier sought IFC support for the auction of non-performing housing loans. The portfolio, consisting of 55,000 mortgages, has an outstanding principal balance of P13.5 billion, representing about 32 percent of NHMFC's total portfolio of P42 billion.

The winning bidder of the auction last May was Deutsche Bank Real Estate Global Opportunities Fund, a $360-million fund managed by Deutsche Bank.

Bhagat said IFC also had projects lined up for the financial sector but refused to identify these projects.

DOTC urged to fast-track projects

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE JAPAN Bank for International Cooperation said the delays of JBIC-assisted projects in the Philippines have been worsening, particularly the more than P35 billion worth of projects under the Department of Transportation and Communications.

"DOTC and LRTA (Light Rail Transit Authority) projects face serious project implementation delays as compared to the infrastructure projects under other Philippine government agencies," said JBIC country representative Osamu Murata in his May 27 letter to the heads of the DOTC, Department of Finance and National Economic and Development Authority.

He cited eight DOTC projects that have been delayed for up to 53 months now.

These include the P11-billion capacity expansion of LRT Line 1, about P500-million worth of variation orders in LRT Line 2, two tranches of airports upgrade worth P3.3 billion, two aviation modernization projects worth P12.5 billion, the P6.7-billion Iloilo port upgrading and a P3-billion seaport improvement.

Murata has asked Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza to submit a detailed plan of action and specific schedules for the delayed projects. He hoped the DOTC would cooperate and fast track the remaining JBIC-funded projects.

Murata said despite the delays, the JBIC has no plans at the moment to scrap funding for any of the projects under the DOTC.

Murata believed that the DOTC had no clear understanding of how the JBIC operates and this was what caused the tension between the lending agency and the transportation department.

The JBIC is the country's largest soft-loan creditor and donor, which finances about 60 percent of foreign-assisted projects in the Philippines. The DOTC, according to Murata, was one of the biggest recipients of JBIC funds in the country.

He believed the DOTC did not like the consistent follow-ups that the JBIC had been doing related to the delayed projects. The DOTC, through its assistant secretary Robert Castañares wrote Murata on May 11, criticizing the JBIC country representative for his "belligerent behavior" and alleged interference in the transport agency's internal affairs.

In that letter, Castañares asked Murata about "a grand conspiracy to cover up irregularities" and about his "deafening silence and apparent tolerance on irregularities committed by Japanese contractors."

"JBIC does not condone nor tolerate any improprieties or irregularities in the procurement process under JBIC-ODA (official development assistance) loans," said Murata.

Murata said it was the duty of the borrower to inform the JBIC of any irregularities and the agency would take appropriate action. He said the JBIC did not receive any such notice from the DOTC.

4 groups planning to put up LNG plants

By Abigail L. Ho

THREE foreign groups and one Fil-American firm are keen on setting up a liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility in Bataan, boosting efforts to bring LNG to Metro Manila.

Energy Undersecretary Peter Anthony Abaya said meetings were conducted with these groups more than a week ago.

The interested parties, however, had some apprehensions about not having the economies of scale that would enable them to recover their investments, he said.

"Their perception is that there's only room for one player right now. Whoever comes in first will be it for the medium term," he said.

Right now, the Malampaya Deep Water Gas-to-Power Project in offshore Palawan is capable of producing 3,000 megawatts (MW) worth of natural gas.

Of this, 2,700 MW had been committed for the use of the country's three natural gas-fired power plants: the 1,200-MW Ilijan, the 1,000-MW Sta. Rita and the 500-MW San Lorenzo plants in Batangas.

Abaya said the only way to build the economies of scale was to boost the supply of natural gas from the Malampaya gas find.

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How to break up the oil and other cartels

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

ENERGY Secretary Raphael Lotilla calls for the "passage of an overall competition law that will promote fair trade and prevent cartelization of the oil industry." He thinks the penal code's section 186, the existing law against cartels enacted way back in 1931, should be modernized. About 10 years ago, an excellent anti-cartel bill was filed in the Senate. The bill died in the committee. What makes Lotilla think that a similar bill will not suffer the same fate?

We do not need a new law. All we need is to enforce—at long, long last—section 186.

Here is the entire section 186 on monopolies and combinations in restraint of trade, or cartels: "The penalty of *prision coreccional* in its minimum period or a fine ranging from P200 to P6,000 , or both, shall be imposed upon:

1. Any person who shall enter into any contract or agreement or shall take part in any conspiracy or combination in the form of a trust or otherwise, in restraint of trade or commerce or to prevent by artificial means free competition in the market;

2. Any person who shall monopolize any merchandise or object of trade or commerce, or shall combine with any other person or persons to monopolize said merchandise or object in order to alter the price thereof by spreading false rumors or making use of any other artifice to restrain free competition in the market;

3. Any person who, being a manufacturer, producer, or processor of any merchandise or object of commerce or an importer of any merchandise or object of commerce from any foreign country, either as principal or agent, wholesaler or retailer, shall combine, conspire or agree in any manner with any person likewise engaged in the manufacture, production, processing, assembling or importation of such merchandise or object of commerce or with any other persons not so similarly engaged for the purpose of making transactions prejudicial to lawful commerce, or of increasing the market price in any part of the Philippines, of any such merchandise or object of commerce manufactured, produced, processed, assembled in or imported into the Philippines, or any article in the manufacture of which such manufactured, produced, processed, or imported merchandise or object of commerce is used.

"If the offense mentioned in this article affects any food substance, motor fuel or lubricants [emphasis mine], or other articles of prime necessity, the penalty shall be that of *prision mayor* in its maximum or medium periods it being sufficient for the imposition thereof that the initial steps have been taken toward carrying out the purpose of the combination.

"Any property possessed under any contract or by any combination mentioned in the preceding paragraphs, and being the subject thereof, shall be forfeited to the Government of the Philippines.

"Whenever any of the offenses described above is committed by a corporation or association, the president and each one of its agents or representatives in the Philippines in case of a foreign corporation or association, who shall have knowingly permitted or failed to prevent the commission of such offense, shall be held liable as principals thereof."

This law is broad enough. The fines are petty in today's inflated peso, but the prison terms are enough deterrent—if the law is applied. But, as Lotilla rightly observes, since its enactment, the law has never been enforced. No case has ever been filed under section 186. No cartel has ever been brought to justice. Section 186 might as well have been written with invisible ink.

If a new law is enacted, what makes Lotilla think it will be enforced? What we need is something like the Anti-Trust Division of the US Department of Justice. This division is so dreaded that even Bill Gates does not want to tangle with it.

Here, we have price regulatory boards and price coordinating councils. When the oil companies want to raise prices, they go to the regulatory board. Doesn't this restrict competition? When dressed chicken prices went down because of importations, the local raisers went to the price coordinating council; soon after, a 40-percent tariff was slapped on imported chicken. The cement industry pleaded for protection from cheap imports; a safeguard duty was slapped on imported cement. Is this fair trade?

And who pays for all these protection? The poor Filipino consumer, who else?

I suggest Lotilla should persuade the President to scrap the price regulatory boards and price coordinating councils. In their places, she should create a powerful no-nonsense anti-trust division in the Department of Justice that will break up all the cartels in the country. Then we can all enjoy watching prices come tumbling down.

Union Bank sees 20% profit growth

UNION Bank of the Philippines (UBP), the banking arm of the Aboitiz group, is projecting a 15-20 percent growth in its net profit this year, from a record profit of P2.28 billion last year.

The 2004 profit represented a 12.2 percent growth from year-ago level.

In the first quarter, Union Bank's profit grew by 58 percent from year-ago, said UBP president Victor Valdepeñas in an interview.

The bank declared a cash dividend of P1.15 per share payable on May 27, 2005. Over the last five years, dividends have grown by a compounded annual growth of 52.4 percent.

The bank's core strengths are corporate cash management, payment services, foreign exchange, capital markets and corporate finance and consumer finance.

In corporate finance, Valdepeñas said UBP was concentrating on medium-sized corporations.

"We're no longer on big-ticket items. We're avoiding lending P100 million and above unless these are really good names," Valdepeñas said.

"We don't want over-concentration. We're lending to small companies as long as they meet our tight credit standards," he said.

Through its 10-year "Focus 2010" program, UBP aims to become one of the top three universal banks in the Philippines by 2010. As of the first quarter, it ranks 13th, with total resources of P102.34 billion. *Doric C. Dumlao*

PPI defends transfer of plans

PACIFIC Plans Inc. has defended the sale of its fixed plan assets to Lifetime Plans Inc. (Lifetime), saying "nothing fraudulent was committed in the transaction.

The company said this in a statement following the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) decision revoking the registration of Lifetime.

Lawyer Jeanette C. Tecson, PPI spokesperson, explained that no party made money from the transfer adding "we want to shield the more than 400,000 fixed value plans from the continuing hemorrhage of the company from the open-ended plans owing to runaway tuition fees." She said the move even gave some plan holders a return on investments of 2,250 percent.

Tecson said PPI wanted to prevent injury to the 400,000 plus healthy plans that were worth keeping viable. Although some plan holders would disagree and even call this fraudulent, the transfer of fixed plans of PPI to a spin-off company, Lifetime, was the best and correct decision that a prudent management could do within the bounds of the law, she added.

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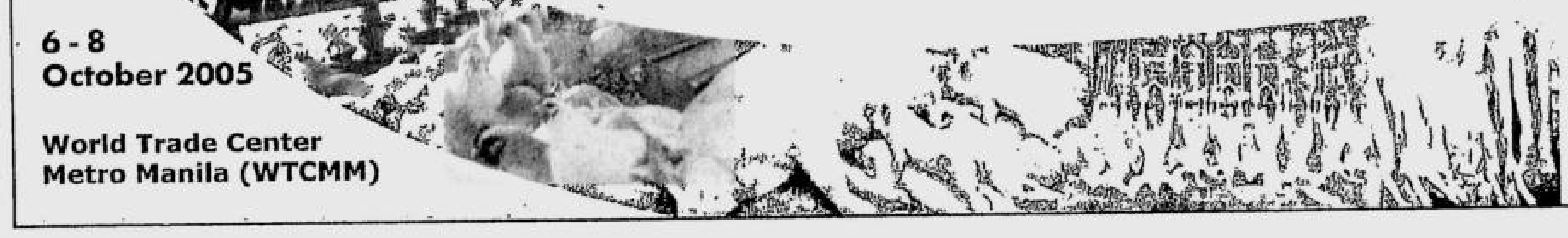

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Double-doors open up to an air-conditioned event hall that seat 500 for banquets and sit-down functions and a maximum of 900 for cocktails. Vertical clearance is at 7.2 meters, giving you ample space to dress it up and play with the interiors using a mix of dramatic lighting and tasteful décor.

Rockwell provides the maintenance and security personnel to ensure that your event goes as smoothly as possible. Parking is not a problem, with three basement levels at the adjacent Power Plant Mall and an opening parking area beside Ateneo Professional Schools.

Let The Rockwell Tent provide you with the best canvass for your memories. For inquiries and reservations, call 890-6888 or e-mail vickyr@rockwell.com.ph.

INTELLICARE-HEALTHWAY CONTRACT SIGNING

In a move to offer value-added service to its corporate clients, Intellicare, a leading HMO in the country, has purchased two mobile clinics and the Laguna Technopark clinic in Sta. Rosa from Healthway Medical Clinics. Shown during the signing held at the Intellicare head office are (from left, seated) Audrey B. Gallardo, Intellicare VP-finance, Mario M. Silos, Intellicare president, Elizabeth Reyes, Healthway president, Lilian Torres, Healthway chief financial officer. Standing, from left, are Rommel J. Ancheta, Intellicare AVP-account management, Jeremy G. Matti, Intellicare VP-sales and marketing, Dr. Elinor Tan, Healthway medical director, Norman P. Amora, Intellicare AVP-sales and Jovi Yulo, Intellicare senior manager-clinic administration.

East West Bank's new customer hotline 888-17

EAST West Bank recently adopted a new customer service hotline, 888-17, made more accessible and easier to recall for the bank's valued patrons. The customer hotline is available for customer inquiries and service assistance for all bank products, including the new EWB Mastercard.

The new access number reveals East West Bank's corporate drive to provide real value and time to every customer. It is highly important for the 10-year-old bank to connect with the customers and readily serve their needs.

This year, East West Bank repositions itself as "the country's preferred consumer bank" by bolstering its consumer financing programs. The bank offers housing, car, and other loans among other competitive products and services for individual and corporate clients.

Clients can also get in touch with the bank through its customer service e-mail service@eastwestbanker.com.

RIBBON CUTTING RITES AT SUBIC DIAMOND CASINO

Bella Dimayuga (left), owner of Bellestar Promotions, was the master of ceremonies at the recent formal inauguration of the Subic Diamond Casino. She also supplies the daily quality entertainment of the casino. With her, from left, are Ben Lee, vice president, Subic Diamond Casino, Teddy Huong, director, Subic Diamond Casino, Madam Sitou, Kathy Chow, Asia's top model and ambassadress of goodwill for CR Airways, Alejandra Clemente, president of Subic International Hotel, Poon Chi Yung, director of Subic Diamond Casino, Mr Hsu, Mr Scott, executive of Subic Diamond Casino, and famous Hong Kong singer Lom Hon Yeung.

Sky Cable, Star Sports' Asian 9-Ball promo

ASIA'S premier 9-ball tour is making its final stop in Manila as the San Miguel Asian 9-Ball Tour takes place from June 3 to 5 at the Robinsons Galleria Trade Hall. Sky Cable and Star Sports will be giving lucky Sky Cable and Home Cable subscribers a chance to meet and greet their favorite pool players and compete in a 9-Ball singles tournament for some cool prizes on June 2, 6 p.m. The tournament is open to the first 32 Sky Cable and Home Cable subscribers who will call in to register through hotline number 910-1577 during office hours.

CMC SYMPOSIUM

The Capitol Medical Center (CMC) department of pediatrics is inviting everyone to its upcoming 10th Scientific Symposium titled 'The Pediatrician and the Surgeon: The Power of Two Focus On Evaluation and Management.' The symposium, which will be held at the CMC 12th floor Auditorium Building V on June 22, is part of CMC's month-long 35th anniversary celebrations. Shown are the consultants of CMC's department of pediatrics. For more information, call 372-3825 local 1747. Capitol Medical Center is located along Quezon Avenue corner Scout Magbanua, Quezon City.

More PEP on page B2-6

Lyceum students sweep junior achievement awards

LYCEUM of the Philippines' marketing, banking and finance, and management students won for the second year in a row (school years 2003 to 2005) the much-coveted Company of the Year Award of the Junior Achievement of the Philippines program.

This year, aside from the grand award, the Lyceum students also received 8 out of the 9 major awards given during the Junior Achievement Awards Night held recently at the Cultural Hall of Petron Corp in Makati City. These were "President of the Year" Kristine May Kuhonta; "Finance Executive of the Year" Bienly Macaraeg; "Production Executive of the Year" Estephany Tolentino; "Marketing Executive of the Year" Rothie Perucho; "Corporate Secretary of the Year" Jenlyn Guadalupe; "Adviser of the Year" Leomer Rocafort; and "Annual Report of the Year". They were also named 1st runner up in the Product of the Year category.

KRISTINE May Kuhonta (2nd from right), 3rd year Management student, receives the 'President of the Year' Award during the recent Japi Awards Night while (from left) Nilo S. Cruz, Japi president, Susan Jo, chair, President of the Year Award, and dean Violeta AV Lazaro look on.

The Junior Achievement of the Philippines Inc is a non-stock, non-profit organization supported by 35 of the country's top multinational companies, and counts, as members, students of 27 of the country's leading institutions of learning, competing with each other in running efficiently their own "mini-companies". The Junior Achievement program is endorsed by the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) as a substantial compliance of the required students' practicum.

For an 8-month period, these student-participants form their respective "mini-companies"-set up objectives, incorporate and capitalize (by raising funds through sale of stocks), organize the board of directors and elect the officers, manufacture and market a product. They also maintain a complete financial record system, pay wages, commissions and taxes, compile an annual report, liquidate the "company" and return their stockholders' original investment plus a dividend, if successful. Last year, Lyceum students were recognized for their "Lamtyztico Company" and, for this year, for their "Craftlychic Company."

Lyceum of the Philippines now accepts applications for enrolment for school year 2005-2006. Information on graduate, law and undergraduate programs being offered is available at 527-8251 or at www.lyceumphil.edu.ph.

SIM card data protector introduced

HAVING problems retrieving your phonebook when you lose your mobile phone? Worry no more. The MySIM SIM Card Data Protector is a handy device that can back up and restore your SIM's phonebook with ease. To back up, simply insert the SIM in the slot at the side of the device and press "1". Your SIM's phonebook will automatically be saved to the device. Should you lose your cell phone, simply insert a new SIM Card and press "2" to restore all you phonebook entries. MySIM can store up to 250 names and numbers and is compatible with all GSM SIM Cards worldwide.

MySIM SIM Card Data Protector is distributed by Adtel Inc. Adtel Inc is the manufacturer and distributor of the famous Baron Super Antenna. MySIM is its second product to be introduced direct to consumers.

MySIM SIM Card Data Protector is currently available at the following retail outlets: Nationwide/Luzon (ADI Telecoms, Megacellular, K-Servico, DIY, Automatic Centre, Abenson, Federal Hardware, Ocampo Appliance, Adessa Appliance); Visayas (Emcor, NIG Marketing, Gaisano Center, Eco Appliance, Airtouch, Aerophone, Galleon Enterprises and Junrex); Mindanao (Emcor, Herrera Brothers, Cellular Clinic, Cellplus, Tekphone, Mobile Republic, Ihop, Citiphones, Text Avenue, Cellblock, Skycom, Mobile Network, 8Telcom, RXY Telecom, 168 Goldline, Ouyang Enterprises, James-AR Enterprises).

For inquiries, e-mail etalcomendras@adtelinc.com.ph or call the MySIM hotline at 434-6717 or text 0917-8974106 and look for Erwyn Alcomendras.

Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE AUTHORITY
San Ramon, Zamboanga City

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

CONSTRUCTION OF ONE (1) UNIT
STANDARD MANUFACTURING BUILDING

The Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority (ZCSEZA) will construct a storage-type building with a total floor area of 1,032 square meters within the First Industrial Park. The completed structure will be leased/rented out to prospective investors in the zone.

1. The Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority (ZCSEZA), through the Corporate Operating Budget 2005 intends to apply the sum of SIX MILLION FIVE HUNDRED FIFTY-TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED FORTY PESOS & 27/100 (P6,552,540.27) being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for "Construction of One (1) Unit Standard Manufacturing Building". Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The ZCSEZA now invites potential Bidders to apply for eligibility for "Construction of One (1) Unit Standard Manufacturing Building". Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license applicable to the above type and cost of the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the eligibility forms. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The deadline for submission of eligibility documents shall be on or before June 29, 2005. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Document. Completion of the works is required within 155 Calendar Days.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act No. 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted unless otherwise stated to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR Part A of R.A. 9184, only Bids from Bidders who pass an eligibility check will be opened. The Bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.
4. Interested Bidders shall secure the Eligibility documents, upon their submission of a Letter of Intent (LOI Form available at the address given below); from the BAC Secretariat at the address stated below, on or before June 20, 2005. They shall submit the accomplished Eligibility documents, in order for these to be received by the BAC Secretariat in the same address, on or before June 29, 2005
5. Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from ZCSEZA and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8.00 am to 5:00 p.m. on June 30, 2005 to July 7, 2005
6. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of nonrefundable fee of Two Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (P 2, 500.00). The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the bidder or his authorized representative on or before June 30, 2005 to July 7, 2005.
7. The ZCSEZA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on July 15, 2005 at 10:00 AM at the Conference Hall, Ground Floor Administration Building, San Ramon, Zamboanga City.
8. Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address below at or before July 28, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's Check, Manager's Check and in an amount of Sixty Five Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Five Pesos & 40/100 (P65,525.40). Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on July 28, 2005 at 10.00 a.m at the Conference Hall, Ground Floor, Administration Building, San Ramon, Zamboanga City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below on July 28, 2005 at 10:00a.m.
9. The ZCSEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) GEORGINA PANTALEON-YU
Chairman and Administrator
Zamboanga City Special Economic Zone Authority
Administration Building, San Ramon, Zamboanga City
(062) 992-0409, (062) 993-0209

(PDI - May 30 & June 6, 2005)

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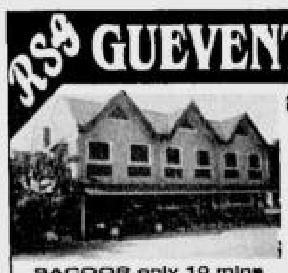

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On: Thursday 2nd June 2005 - 10:30am

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On View: Wednesday 1st June 2005 - 9:00am to 5:00pm & morning of sale day
Refundable Deposit: Php20,000 (upon registration)
Please bring valid ID to be presented during registration

For further information please contact Mags Calderon-Alicante
at Tel: 852 2910 loc. 111 Email: mags.calderon@henrybutcher.com

GoIndustry Henry Butcher
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PUBLIC NOTICES

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NOTICE OF LOSS

"Talisay Rural Bank, Inc. Stock Cert. #28, 238, C-786, C-876, C-969, C-1065, C-1312, C-1411 registered in the name of Leticia L. del Rosario w/a total of 1,436 shares were declared lost. If no contest received w/in 1 month, new certificates will be issued."
(PDI-May 30, June 6, 13, 2005.)

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PNOC-Energy Development Corporation
Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio
Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines
Telephone 8931320 ext. 5179 Fax 8401461
PNOC The Energy Company

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites prospective Partners to apply for eligibility and, if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the project:

MINERAL EXPLORATION/ASSESSMENT WORK IN THE SOUTHERN NEGROS EXPLORATION PERMIT AREA UNDER EXPLORATION PERMIT NO. EXP-006 (97) NOR - SECOND RENEWAL
(EDC 05-069)

Prospective partners must meet these criteria:

1. Any Filipino citizen of legal age and with capacity to contract; or a corporation, partnership, association or cooperative organized or authorized for the purpose of engaging in mining with technical and financial capability to undertake mineral resources development and duly registered in accordance with law at least sixty percent (60%) of the capital of which is owned by Filipino citizens; provided, that a legally organized foreign-owned corporation (i.e. any corporation, partnership, association or cooperative duly registered in accordance with law in which less than fifty percent (50%) of the capital is owned by Filipino citizens) shall also be deemed eligible;
2. With a minimum authorized capital stock of Ten Million Philippine Peso (PhP 10,000,000.00) and a minimum paid-up capital of Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Philippine Pesos (PhP 2,500,000.00);
3. With at least two (2) geologists having a minimum of five-year professional experience. The submission of curricula vitae and track records in mining operations and environmental management of the technical personnel who shall undertake the activities in the submitted Work Program shall be strictly required as a mandatory requirement; and
4. In case of a corporation, must declare and show proof that it is already a holder of an Exploration Permit (EP), Mineral Agreement (MA) or Financial or Technical Assistance Agreement (FTAA).

   The compliance of a corporation to criterion # 4 shall automatically establish its eligibility to bid for the subject project.

The Eligibility Documents and the Bid Documents shall be available for issuance to interested parties starting **May 30, 2005** from the PD-Contracts Administration Group / BAC Secretariat [c/o F.T. Tolibas (loc 5179)] upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Philippine Peso Five Thousand (PhP 5,000.00)**, or **US Dollar One Hundred Thirty (US$ 130.00)** in case of foreign bidders to defray courier expenses.

For purposes of clarifying certain issues, interested parties are invited to a clarificatory meeting to be held on **June 7, 2005 10:00 A.M.** at the BAC Conference Room, Bldg. V, PNOC-EDC, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines. Site Inspection will be held thereafter at the exploration site in Southern Negros, Philippines **(to be scheduled later).**

Interested parties shall submit their respective Letter of Intent and sealed Application for Eligibility in three (3) sets to the PD-Contracts Administration Group / BAC Secretariat, PNOC-Energy Development Corporation, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines not later than **5:00 P.M. on June 13, 2005**. The parties' Application for Eligibility will be evaluated and parties who are eligible to bid will be notified by PNOC-EDC.

Eligible parties shall then be required to submit their Financial Proposal in two separate sealed envelopes. All bids submitted by eligible parties must be accompanied by a bid security, callable on demand and valid for a period of **One Hundred Twenty (120)** calendar days reckoned from the date of bid opening, for an amount of at least **Philippine Peso One Million Three Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand (PhP 1,375,000.00)**, if in the form of cash, cashier's check / manager's check, or certified check; **Philippine Peso Two Million Sixty-Two Thousand Five Hundred (PhP 2,062,500.00)**, if in the form of a bank guarantee; or **Philippine Peso Three Million Four Hundred Thirty-Seven Thousand Five Hundred (PhP 3,437,500.00)**, if in the form of a surety bond. The bids must be delivered to:

Bids and Awards Committee
c/o PD-Contracts Administration Group / BAC Secretariat
PNOC-Energy Development Corporation
Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio
Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines

At or before 2:00 P.M. on July 5, 2005. Bids will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidders' representative who chose to attend.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders on the ground of PNOC-EDC's action.

The Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--May 30, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
MANILA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AUTHORITY
MIAA Administration Building,
MIA Road, Pasay City, Metro Manila

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

It has come to the attention of the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) that certain personalities, who let themselves out as having connection or affiliation with MIAA and using the name of General Manager Alfonso G. Cusi and/or its officials, have been approaching certain individuals or entities and promising them the prospect of concessions and other business contracts at the NAIA Terminal 3.

The public is informed that the MIAA has not authorized any individual or group of people to undertake such solicitations, whether formally or informally. The public is advised to be wary of the activities of these unscrupulous personalities.

The Management

(PDI-May 30, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Privatization and Management Office (PMO) invites interested parties to apply for eligibility and, if found eligible, to Bid for the hiring of a FINANCIAL ADVISOR for the privatization of Radio Philippines Network, Inc. (RPN).

Interested parties may secure the Eligibility and Bid Documents from the Marketing Department, 5th Floor, PMO Building, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00.

The schedule of activities is as follows:

Particular	Date	Time
Issuance of Eligibility and to Bid Documents	May 30, 2005	8:30 a.m.
Deadline for Submission of Eligibility Documents	June 7, 2005	5:30 p.m.
Opening and Submission of Bids	June 27, 2005	10:00 a.m.

Only Eligible/Pre-qualified parties can participate in the Bidding on June 27, 2005, to be held at 6th Floor, PMO Conference Room.

For details, please contact Ms. Melinda B. Cortez of the PMO Marketing Department at telephone numbers 892-21-45 or 818-47-33.

The PMO reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any defect therein and make an award to the bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the PMO. The PMO likewise assumes no obligation for whatever losses that may be incurred by the bidders in the preparation of the bids, nor does it guarantee that the award shall be made.

(PDI--May 28, 29 & 30, 2005)

WARNING TO PNEUMATIC USERS

The public is hereby warned on non-genuine and imitation that look like **SMC pneumatic products** that are now circulating in the country.

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PNOC-Energy Development Corporation
Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio
Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines
Telephone 8931320 ext. 5119 Fax 8401461
PNOC The Energy Company

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites Contractors to apply for eligibility and, if subsequently found eligible, to bid for the project:

DETAILED ENGINEERING, SUPPLY, DELIVERY, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF THE PALINPINON-II INSTRUMENTATION & CONTROL SYSTEM REFURBISHMENT AND PALINPINON-II FCRS OPTIMIZATION INSTRUMENTATION AND CONTROL SYSTEM PROJECTS
EDC 05-044

The Approved Budget is PhP 33,242,210.00 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund The contract duration is three hundred sixty (360) calendar days.

The Eligibility Documents and the Bid Documents shall be available for issuance to contractors starting May 30, 2005 from the PD-Contracts Administration Group / BAC Secretariat [c/o F.T. Tolibas (loc. 5179)] upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Philippine Peso Five Thousand (PhP 5,000.00), or US Dollar One Hundred Thirty (US$ 130.00)** in case of foreign bidders to defray courier expenses.

For purposes of clarifying certain issues, interested bidders are invited to a clarificatory meeting to be held on June 6, 2005 (10:00 A.M.) at the BAC Conference Room, 1st Floor, Bldg. V, PNOC-EDC, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila. Site Inspection will be held (to be scheduled later) at the PNOC-EDC Southern Negros Geothermal Production Field (SNGPF) Valencia, Negros Oriental.

The two (2) stage bidding procedure shall be employed. For the first stage, bidders shall submit their respective Letter of Intent, sealed Application for Eligibility and the initial Technical Proposal in three (3) sets to the PD-Contracts Administration Group / BAC Secretariat, PNOC-Energy Development Corporation, Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila not later than 2:00 P.M. on June 30, 2005. The bidders' Application for Eligibility and the initial Technical Proposal shall be evaluated and bidders who are eligible to bid will be notified by PNOC-EDC.

For the second stage, eligible bidders shall be required to submit their final Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal in two separate sealed envelopes. All bids submitted by eligible bidders must be accompanied by a bid security, callable on demand and valid for a period of **One Hundred Twenty (120)** calendar days reckoned from the date of bid opening, for an amount of at least Philippine Peso Three Hundred Thirty-Two Thousand Four Hundred Twenty-Two and 10/100 (PhP 332,422.10), if in the form of cash, cashier's check / manager's check, or certified check; **Philippine Peso Four Hundred Ninety-Eight Thousand Six Hundred Thirty-Three and 15/100 (PhP 498,633.15)**, if in the form of a bank guarantee; or **Philippine Peso Eight Hundred Thirty-One Thousand Fifty-Five and 25/100 (PhP 831,055.25)**, if in the form of a surety bond. The bids must be delivered to:

Bids and Awards Committee
PNOC-Energy Development Corporation
Energy Center, Bonifacio Global City
Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines

At or before 2:00 P.M. on August 12, 2005. Bids will be opened immediately thereafter in the presence of bidders' representative who chose to attend.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders on the ground of PNOC-EDC's action.

DELIVERY SCHEDULE - The Goods under this Invitation are required to be delivered within **One Hundred Eighty (180)** days upon receipt of the Letter of Credit. No credit will be given to earlier deliveries and bids offering delivery beyond one hundred eighty (180) days will be treated as non-responsive.

The Goods are considered to be delivered when all the items specified in the Contract have arrived at Manila Port or at any other location or port in the Philippines mutually agreed upon by the Bidder / Supplier and PNOC-EDC. Hence, the one hundred eighty (180) day delivery is inclusive of shipping time.

The Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--May 30, 2005)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

RODRIGO I. DELA PEÑA, JR.

The public is hereby informed that **MR. RODRIGO I. DELA PEÑA, JR.**, the former ADPIC Regional Sales Manager for Regions I & II, whose picture appears above, has been terminated for cause & is no longer connected with ADP INDUSTRIES CORPORATION since October 6, 2004.

Any transaction entered into by him, or which he may hereafter undertake in behalf of the company after October 6, 2004, shall no longer be honored.

(PDI – May 30, 2005)

HOUSING AND LAND USE REGULATORY BOARD
Expanded National Capital Region Field Office
2nd Floor, HLURB Building, Kalayaan Avenue, Diliman,
Quezon City

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL COMPANY (owner) and PHOENIX SUN INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION (developer) have filed with this Board a sworn registration statement for the sale of units at EL PUEBLO MANILA (Family Building F2, Building C – Cluster 1) located at Anonas St., Brgy. 630 Sta. Mesa, Manila, specifically described as Lot 2-C-4-C Psd-3779 (portion) covered by TCT No. 143134 nd.

All papers relative thereto shall upon request and payment of processing fee, be available for inspection during business hours by any person having legal interest thereon.

Absent any legal impediment, the above-cited project is deemed registered and a certificate, in evidence thereof, shall forthwith be issued after two (2) weeks from the last day of publication.

Quezon City, Metro Manila.

(Sgd.) JESSE A. OBLIGACION
Regional Director

(PDI- May 30 & June 6, 2005)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Please be advised that **CYNTHIA M. PAGKATIPUNAN**, Lot 9 Crisantenum Street, Greenland Executive Village, Cainta, Rizal, whose picture appears above is not authorized to represent BENJAMIN Y. SISON.

(PDI - May 30, 2005)

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS
dti

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the application of DEPENDABLE PACKAGING AND PRINTING HOUSE CORP. with office address at 13 Ubay Street, Sta. Mesa Heights, Quezon City for registration with the Board of Investments under Book I of the Omnibus Investments Code of 1987, otherwise known as E.O. 226, as Amended, as a Expanding Export Producer of Printed Packaging Materials at a capacity of 60,603,640 pieces per year with project site at same office address stated above has been officially accepted on May 26, 2005 and is currently being processed.

Any person with valid objections to or pertinent comments on the above-mentioned application may file his/her objection, in writing under oath, with the BOI within one (1) week from the date of this publication.

Issued this 26th day of May 2005.

(Sgd.) RUDY B. CAÑA
Officer-in-Charge
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI – May 30, 2005)

POEA
24-HR HOTLINES
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722-1155

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES
SUGAR REGULATORY ADMINISTRATION
North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
P.O. Box 70, U.P. Diliman, Quezon City
TIN 000-784-336-000

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed Bids will be accepted and thereafter opened on June 23, 2005 at the time set hereunder, at the Training Room, Main Building, Sugar Regulatory Administration (SRA), North Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City, for the sale of the following SRA lots.

A. SRA Commercial Lots at Sugartowne, Batasan Hills, Q.C.

LOCATION	TCT	LOT AREA	COST/SQ.M.	MINIMUM SELLING PRICE
Blk 5, Lot 12	238389	380 sqm	P 6,500 00	P 2,470,000 00
Blk 29, Lot 1	238385	380 sqm	6,500 00	2,470,000 00
Blk 15, Lot 38	133294	779 sqm.	6,000.00	4,674,000 00
Blk 33	133888	2,499 sqm.	6,000.00	14,994,000 00
		4 038 sqm		P 24,608,000.00

B. Lot No. 2293-A in front of Villa Del Sol at Barangay Magliman, San Fernando, Pampanga:

LOCATION	TCT	LOT AREA	COST/SQ.M.	MINIMUM SELLING PRICE
Lot No. 2293-A	96098-R	20,000 sqm.	P500 00	P10 000 000.00

Bid forms including the Rules and Regulations and other documents pertinent to the sale of lots at P1,000.00 per bid per individual lot shall be issued by the Secretariat, SRA Disposal Committee starting June 13, 2005.

Schedule of Activities	Date of Activity
Issuance of Letter of Intent and Pre-qualification Forms	May 31 – June 8, 2005
Deadline for the submission of Letter of Intent and Pre-qualification Requirements	June 9, 2005
Issuance of Bid Forms and the Rules and Regulations on the sale of lots	June 13, 2005
Pre-Bid Conference Sale of Sugartowne Commercial Lots and Magliman, San Fernando Lot	June 16, 2005 at 9:00 AM
Public Bidding Sale of Sugartowne Commercial Lots and Magliman, San Fernando Lot	June 23, 2005 at 9:00 AM

The purpose of the Pre-Bidding conference is to address issues regarding the disposal of the lots at the SRA, Training Room, North Avenue Diliman, Q.C.

All bids must be accompanied by a deposit either in cash or Manager's/Cashier's check equivalent to 10% of the total bid price.

For inquiries, please call
The Disposal Committee Secretariat • Tel No. 929-6837

The SRA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality or defect therein, and to accept any or all offers that may be considered most advantageous to the SRA.

(Sgd.) AIDA F. IGNACIO
Chairperson, Disposal Committee

(PDI - May 28, 29 & 30, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Quezon City

NOTICE OF SALE THRU AUCTION

The National Food Authority (NFA) wishes to announce to all interested Farmer's Organizations (FO's), Retailers and other interested NFA licensed wholesalers/millers that NFA will be accepting sealed offers for the Sale thru Auction of 50,000 MT or (1.0-Million bags) 15% brokens Vietnam Rice as follows:

COVERAGE	VOLUME (IN BGS)	INDICATIVE PRICE	
		Ex Vessel	Ex-Warehouse
Mindanao	200,000	P970.00/bag	P1,010/bag
Visayas	300,000	P970.00/bag	P1,010/bag
Luzon	500,000	P970.00/bag	P1,010/bag

The Pre-auction Conference and Auction Proper shall be held at 2:00 PM in the following dates or until the whole volume for auction has been sold/exhausted

Venue	Contact Person	Pre-Auction Conference	Auction Proper
NFA Davao Office Sta. Ana Ave., Davao City (for Mindanao only)	Ms. Dianne Silva Tel # (083) 554-3200 Tel # (082) 227-4166	June 2, 2005	June 6, 2005
NFA Cebu Office Gov M. Cuenco Ave., Banilad, Cebu City (for Visayas only)	Mr. Piollo Santos Tel # (032) 232-1939 Tel # (032) 232-6832	June 3, 2005	June 6, 2005
FDC, FTI Compound Taguig, Metro Manila (for Luzon only)	Ms. Espie Tecson Tel # 712-1708 Tel # 712-1572	June 2, 2005	June 6, 2005

All offers must be accompanied by bid bond equivalent to 10% of the volume bidded in the form of Manager's or Cashier's Check payable to NFA issued by a reputable commercial bank.

Interested bidders may secure the terms and conditions starting June 2, 2005 at the aforementioned venues from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. For any inquiries, interested bidders can call the above-mentioned contact persons.

Bid documents will be available during the pre-auction conference to qualified bidders/offerors upon payment of non-refundable fee of P1,500.00 for FO's and retailers and P3,000.00 for other interested bidders (wholesalers/millers).

The National Food Authority reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality thereof, and to accept only such bids that are advantageous to the Agency.

(Sgd.) CONRADO DL IBANEZ
Assistant Administrator /
Chairman, Disposition Committee

(PDI - May 27 & 30 2005)

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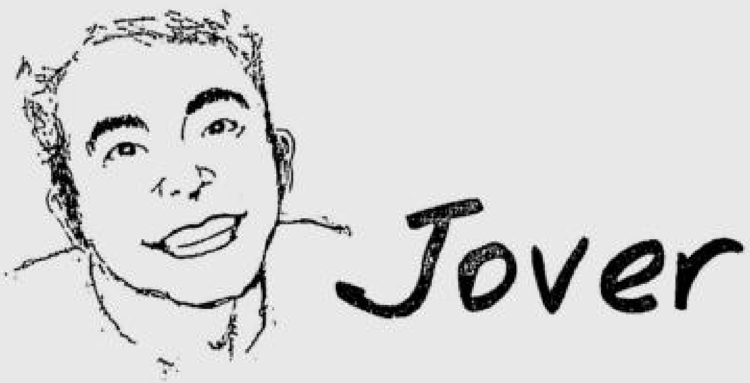
Jose Virgilio R. Layno

Born on April 13, 1967.
Peacefully joined his Creator on May 26, 2005.
His parents – Virgilio and Remedios ✝
Grandmother – Alicia
Brothers and sister – Allan Jude and wife Maricon
Dave and wife Sheila
Shella Marie and husband Andy
Nephews and nieces – Alec, Amiel, Alysha, Adyson, Shalstyne
Aunties, uncles, cousins, and other relatives
request prayers for the repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at Nacional Memorial Homes
264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.
The Christian service will be on Wednesday,
June 1, 2005, 7:30 AM at Chapel 2B.
Interment will be right after the service
at Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.



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Opera, musicale, and kakanin lover.
Amateur bowler. Scuba diver. Mountain climber.
Good friend. Teacher. Guidance counselor.
He was all these and more.

We thank the Lord for this brilliant young man.
For letting him pass our way and touch our hearts.

Born to eternity on May 26, 2005 at the age of 38.
We ask all readers to pray for his soul.

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John 14:6

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PAZ "Pacing" LACSON - MANGUBAT BRION

Peacefully joined the Lord
on May 26, 2005 at the age of 86.

Her bereaved children and children-in-law **Oscar & Baby Brion, Loida & Joe Gomez, Carlo & Minnie Brion, Aleli & Neri Villaceran, Evie & Najie Gapangada, May & Linton Abrenica, Arnel & Irene Brion, Larry & Lorie Brion**; grandchildren, sister **Patrocinio M. Saulog**, brother **Liborio L. Mangubat**, and all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Resurrection Chapel, San Pablo Cathedral, San Pablo City.

Interment is on June 2, 2005 at San Gabriel Memorial Park, San Pablo City, after the 9:00 a.m. Mass at the Resurrection Chapel.

"Let me live for love of you, Let me die for love of you, Let my last heartbeat be an act of perfect love."
St. Therese Couderc

Sr. Delia J. Manhit, r.c.

Religious of the Cenacle
Born: November 11, 1927
Entered the Cenacle: September 12, 1962.
Entered Eternal Life: May 28, 2005

In deep thanksgiving for the gift of her person and her life, and with abiding faith that she now rests in God's embrace, we, the Cenacle Sisters together with the Manhit Family and her many friends and former retreatants, request the pious readers to pray for her eternal repose.

Her remains lie at the Cenacle Retreat House Chapel, 59 Nicanor Reyes St., Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Interment will be on Wednesday, June 1, 2005 at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the mass of the resurrection at 8:30 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the St. Therese Couderc Foundation for the Poor will be greatly appreciated.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life." John 3:16

... Always in our thoughts
forever in our hearts...

In Memory of Our Beloved

JULIE ANNE LIM EVORA

September 18, 1977 – May 30, 2003

Please join us in our prayers and offerings of Holy Masses at the following churches for **JULIE'S** eternal peace and happiness:

Sta. Maria dela Strada, Quezon City	6:00 a.m.
Baclaran Redemptorist Church	6:00 a.m.
Fatima Chapel, Cagayan de Oro	6:00 a.m.
San Nicolas Tolentino, Naujan Oriental, Mindoro	6:30 a.m.
St. Anne Catholic Church, Las Vegas, Nevada	7:30 a.m.
St. John the Baptist, West Covina	7:30 a.m.

We will always think of POT as living in the hearts of those she touched, for nothing loved is ever lost – and SHE WAS LOVED SO MUCH.

Jimmy & Ceres; Jeff & Laura; Jennie & Luel; Jan Camille, Christian Jaime, Jan Caitlin and Lola Amparing.

Dr. Guillermo Valmonte De Los Santos

M.D., FPCS, FICS, FPOA
UST Faculty of Medicine & Surgery (1940)

Peacefully rests in the grace and goodness of our Lord on May 29, 2005 at the age of 90.

He will be missed by his loving wife **Viring**; children **Willie & Debbie, Janie-vi & Nap, Eric** (✝) **& Carrie, Nilo & Bibang, Fe & Alan**; grandchildren **Mavi, BJ, Sunshine, Raphael, Nikko, Jiggy, Nathan, Mara, Paolo, Bettina, Iñigo & Gabbie**; surviving sister **Betty Cabagnot**; and other relatives.

His remains lie in state at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Broadway, Quezon City. Interment will be announced later.

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Raise a family upstairs.

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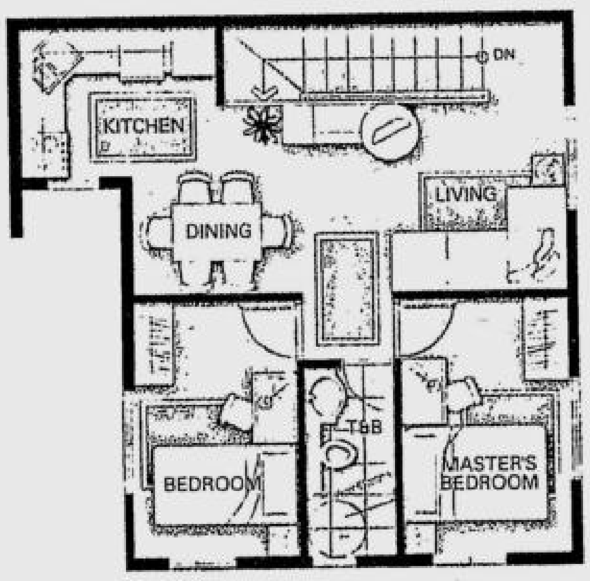
Do Business at Home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STA. ROSA, LAGUNA

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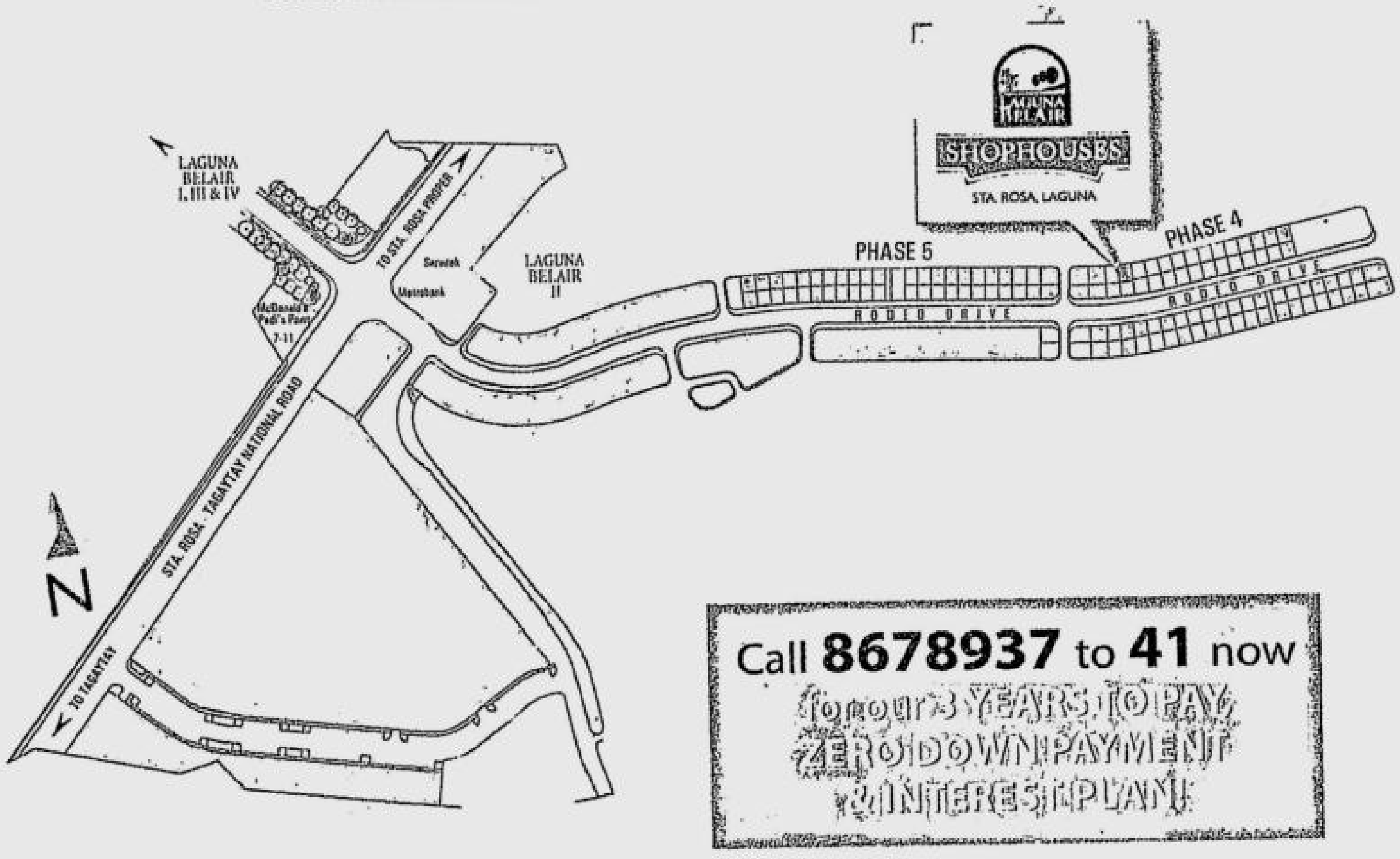
- Separate entrances to the shop and your home for your privacy
- A large and ready market of around 2,300 Laguna BelAir families
- Strategically located along Rodeo Drive in Laguna BelAir 2, soon to become the main commercial strip for the whole Laguna BelAir township
- Easy access to Sta. Rosa-Tagaytay National Road and work centers like the Laguna Technopark and Laguna International Industrial Park
- Existing leisure amenities such as a clubhouse with gym, pool, playground and basketball, tennis and volleyball courts
- Existing village facilities including Laguna BelAir School and Our Mother of Perpetual Help Parish Church

Mix business with pleasure—the pleasure of your family's company—under one roof. Only at a Laguna BelAir Shophouse.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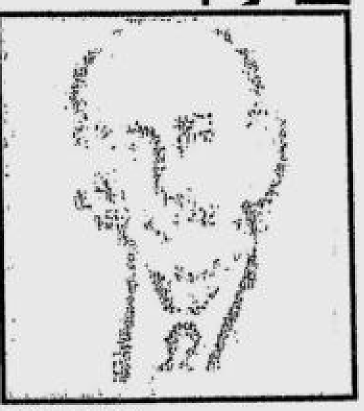
Business Features Editor **Margie Quimpo-Espino**

BUSINESS *Monday*

Fulfilling a US soldier's dream



DADDY Hart

By Margie Quimpo-Espino

WHEN American Irving S. "Daddy" Hart set up the Philippine Band of Mercy 68 years ago, his only goal was to regularly raise funds to provide for the operations of children with deformities, primarily those with cleft lips and palates.

He tapped all the people he knew for funding—many of them Americans who were then executives of businesses in the country, or members of Rotary Clubs.

Little did Hart know that he had struck upon a formula that assured the continuity of his vision.

Today, the group he set up has taken its mission of helping children with deformities to a higher level—by helping the children's families have better lives.

THE PHILIPPINE Band of Mercy is run like a business.

Daddy Hart is a New Yorker who first came to the Philippines in 1871 to join the 3rd Cavalry. He shuttled between the US and Manila until he decided to stay in the country for good.

In 1927, he started his mission of mercy, starting with a girl from Zamboanga.

Ten years later, he set up PBM with the support of the Rotary Clubs, first of Iloilo, then of Manila. Hart devoted 42 years of his life to his mission until his death in 1954.

Lending fund

PBM today focuses on children with cleft lips/palates and those with hydrocephalus and meningocoele. Since 1937, it has helped 55,767 children get the operations they needed. But the total number of patients it helped has reached 145,576.

A couple of years ago, PBM set up the Chandumal Mirani Lending Fund, which provides loans to families of children the PBM has helped, to be used as seed money for entrepreneurial livelihood projects.

PBM president Jesus Perez Cardenas says the foundation realized that while it was ridding the children of their physical deformities, the kids did not have much of a future because they came from poor families.

"We knew they had no chance of better lives so we wanted to train the people in livelihood programs, and we also knew we had to keep the funding going," Cardenas says.

It was then that the PBM board, led by its chair, Bob Mirani, set up the fund to help improve the lives of the children's families. Mirani, an Indian, named the fund after his father.

The loan amounts are not big—P3,000 for the first loan and an additional P2,000 for succeeding ones, up to a maximum of P15,000. An interest rate of 2 percent per loan is charged and the repayment period is determined by the borrower.

"We stress to them the need to comply with the requirements so they can borrow again," he adds.

Success stories

The lending fund already has its share of success stories.

Cardenas cites a family which was able to set up its own *lechon* stall. It started by using the loan to buy a whole *lechon*, which the family sold in kilos to several restaurants.

Most go into the sari-sari store business. Some five mini convenience stores with freezers were set up because of the fund.

PBM is one of the few foundations which has drawn up a scheme that made it self-sustaining.

Cardenas relates that in 2000, PBM drew up a long-term planning session to set the direction of the foundation. They knew that resource generation and sustainability were the two most problems of foundations.

Cardenas says he suggested that PBM move out of its spacious one-hectare property along East Avenue, beside the office of the Social Security System, rent this out, then move to a cheaper location.

The move proved advantageous to PBM.

About two-thirds of the East Avenue property is now rented out to

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Lessons from Bohol

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Corazon PB. Claudio

A "SUMMIT" is a gathering that focuses on issues of highest priority and involves top officials. The latest activity of the Management Association of the Philippines (MAP), the MAP Summit on Sustainable Development (MSSD), was just that.

The MSSD, which was held in Bohol from May 6 to 8, tackled environmental issues, such as air pollution, which need priority attention since they affect our health and survival.

The 37 MSSD participants included public and private sector officials who lead sustainable development efforts in our country.

Our main speakers were Bohol Gov. Erico Aumentado, former Environment and Natural Resources Secretary and now Earth Day Network Philippines Chair Bebet Gozun, Restoration and Development of Natural Resources Inc. President Narda Camacho, ABS-CBN Foundation Managing Director Gina Lopez, Shell Country Chair Ed Chua and Unilever Chair/CEO Howard Belton. Governor Aumentado and Rep. Edgar Chatto welcomed us and, with other Bohol leaders, joined us in a dialogue at the MSSD.

The speakers discussed the MSSD theme, "Walking the Talk Toward Sustainable Development," from the government, civil society, and business perspectives. "Walking the talk" means translating talk into actions, while sustainable development means "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." It covers and relates environmental protection and economic and social development.

In addition to the main speakers, officials of sustainable development programs presented some projects for potential implementation in Bohol. These were Lisa Antonio (Recycling Project of the Philippine Business for the Environment), Aurora Maghirang (Environment Funding Program of the Development Bank of the Philippines), Gerry Garcia and Oscar Valles (Philippine-Canadian Economy and Environmental Management Project), and May Ibañez (USAID-funded Eco-Governance Project). I also introduced the MAP Farm Business School Project and the Solid Waste Management Project funded by GTZ of Germany.

The MSSD was not all work, though. Bohol is such a beautiful province for eco-tourism that it would have been a sin not to explore some of its sites. The Summit also enabled us to recharge and to bond more closely with each other. Evangeline Escobillo (Anchor Savings Bank) effectively made us share our hidden talents in singing and dancing.

Model on sustainable development

The provincial government started with major problems that included quarrying in the Chocolate Hills, disappearance of some islets, soil erosion, destruction of mangrove areas and illegal fishing practices that were destroying the beautiful coral ecosystems of the province, etc.

But through the use of "consensual, participatory and transparent processes," Governor Aumentado has led the Boholanos in meeting those environmental challenges successfully. They created the Bohol Environment Code, the Bohol Environment Management Office, and the Bohol Agenda 21. They integrated the environmental plan into the Local Development Plan and adopted a program framework that relates poverty reduction and environmental protection. They installed an environmental management system that passed ISO 14001 certification. They developed a Natural Resource database and created Ecological Solid Waste Management Boards in all municipalities.

With these and other sustainable development initiatives, Bohol's provincial government has emerged as a leader in local environmental governance and sustainable development.

Bohol's new challenges

The provincial government and the people of Bohol have identified their current priority projects on sustainable development as eco-cultural and agro-tourism projects, reforestation in watershed areas through community-based enterprises, and food security. Bohol is now calling for investments and technical assistance on these areas.

MAP, through the MAP Environment Committee, has started to respond to Bohol's call. At the MSSD, we signed MOUs (Memorandums of Understanding) on reforestation, solid waste management, and farm business schools.

Conclusions from the MSSD

Government must lead in sustainable development by practicing what it preaches. It must have no adverse environmental impact, e.g., government vehicles must not pollute the air. Local government units can be at the frontline of sustainable development efforts, as Bohol has shown.

The Department of Environment and Natural Resources must be an enabler, rather than just a regulator, for environmental protection. It must create an environment that encourages the private sector to be an active partner of the government in sustainable development.

The biggest barriers to sustainable development are poverty and graft and corruption. They can only be overcome with joint efforts of the public and private sectors.

Reforestation must include provision of ecologically sound livelihood opportunities for the communities concerned so that they would stop cutting down trees.

The program against graft and corruption must include the environment. Priority must be given to cleaning the air and getting rid of graft and corruption in the regulation of vehicular and industrial emissions.

Mining of minerals must adopt an ecologically sound mining strategy. Abandoned mine sites must be restored for useful purposes. Mining in our backyards using recycling should also be given priority.

Aiming for the triple bottom-line—economic, social and environmental—is the way for a company to grow and prosper, as demonstrated by Shell and Unilever, as well as by the companies that contributed materials on their environmental management programs—Central Country Estate Inc., Cyber City Teleservices Ltd., the International Rice Research Institute, the Lopez Group of Companies, Manila Water Co., Marsman-Drysdale Agribusiness Group, Northwind Power Development Corp., and Ten Knots Development Corp. These companies have integrated economic, environmental and social considerations in their businesses.

Ma. Lourdes Arcenas (Mindanao Business Council), Atty. Leopoldo San Buenaventura (SEA Consultants Inc.), and Myrna Yao (National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women) moderated the highly productive discussions that produced several measures for action.

Measures for Action

We shall endorse the creation of a Presidential Task Force on Clean Air that shall ensure air quality improvement gets priority attention from all sectors; evaluate, coordinate and monitor air quality improvement plans and programs; provide the public accurate data on air quality, and consolidate functions on cleaning the air.

We shall encourage positive actions on the Millennium Development Goals, which include environmental protection. We shall ask more companies to establish sustainable development programs. We shall also promote participation in the Philippine Environment Partnership Program, the government program that provides self-regulation by industry.

We shall advocate the strengthening of the recycling industry so that it will become a major industry, as it is in the United States. We shall promote "green" purchasing that gives priority to products made from recyclables and through ecologically sound production processes.

We shall encourage more MAP members, in addition to Shell and others, to support the completion of the La Mesa Eco Park and the reforestation of the La Mesa watershed. We shall challenge MAP members to help establish eco parks and reforestation programs in other areas.

We have identified many more measures for action by MAP, the government and other groups. The MAP Secretariat will furnish interested parties a copy of the complete list.

For now, we thank those who helped conduct the MSSD successfully. In addition to those mentioned above, we thank Jeric Sevilla (Manila Water Co.) and Mylene Santos (Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp.) for leading our prayer times during the Summit. I thank my Co-Project Manager, Ed Fereira, former MAP President. Never a dull moment with this guy.

We thank the Asian Development Bank, Unilever, Kodak Philippines Ltd. and DPI Photography Center for their in-kind support. Most of all, we thank Ed Chua and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. for cooperating with MAP in holding the MSSD.

Now, we request all of them, all MAP members, and others to help us walk the talk toward sustainable development.

(Dr. Claudio, Trustee of the Asian Institute of Journalism and Communication, co-chairs MAP's Environment Committee and was Co-Program Manager of the MSSD. The author and the MAP Secretariat may be reached via mapsec@globenet.com.ph.)

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Ensuring the peace of mind and the financial security of its hundreds of thousands of planholders has always been the thrust of Philam Plans. Although a relative youngster in the four-decade old pre-need industry, Philam Plans at sixteen years has built the largest and most stable trust fund to date.

Reports from the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) revealed Philam Plans has over P15.3 B in trust funds as of March 2005, majority of which is placed in liquid and near cash investments.

This trust fund level can more than cover for all the present and future obligations of Philam Plans, reason why its planholders are assured that they can reap the benefits of the money they entrusted to the company in time of their need.

The trust fund is the money a pre-need company sets aside for the payment of planholder benefits. It is the yardstick of security for the planholders in determining the ability of pre-need companies to deliver its promises. The more liquid the trust fund, the greater the ability of the pre-need company to meet its obligations.

Security of trust fund

The SEC sets a policy on trust fund investment portfolio mix for pre-need companies to ensure that they have enough liquid assets and are able to meet their obligations to planholders. Philam Plans adheres to all these requirements as well as to the stricter standards set by its parent company, the country's leading insurance company, Philamlife.

Philam Plans' trust fund portfolio is highly liquid, with over 80% invested in government and near cash equivalents. A consortium of the country's most reputable and professionally run banks including Deutsche Bank, Equitable-PCIB and Philam Savings Bank manage the fund.

Assured benefits: 2005 and beyond

This year, Philam Plans gears up to pay its full maturing obligations totaling to P574 million.

Education benefits amounting to P89 million were released to 8,000 planholders nationwide since April 30. Philam Plans issues manager's checks that are as good as cash to ensure the complete peace of mind of its beloved planholders. Over 3,000 Philam Plans pension planholders are set to receive a total of P362 million from the company this year.

At P15.3 billion trust fund level, Philam Plans not only covers all its present obligations but those for the future years as well. From 2006 to 2011, the programmed maturity benefits of Philam Plans is P9.3 billion, an amount well covered even with the current trust fund levels.

As Philam Plans continues its production growth and its adequate trust fund contributions, its trust fund will continue to grow, assuring at all times that the company will make good on its promises to planholders.

A record of promises kept

As the leader in the pre-need industry, Philam Plans strives to be the standard of excellence in pre-need as it secures the education of the next generation of Filipinos, the retirement of thousands of our countrymen and the commemoration of a well-lived life.

Its inherent strength lies behind its Philam name and its grand heritage from Philamlife. Both are known for financial strength, fiscal prudence and the highest levels of fiduciary integrity.

On its 16th year and beyond, Philam Plans stands by its unblemished record of promises kept. The company continues to uphold the welfare and the future of its valued planholders with innovative products and services that suit their various pre-needs.

Today, tomorrow and for all time, Philam Plans' planholders are assured that their futures are secured.

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POTENTIALLY LUCRATIVE

Sea urchin culture gives life to Ilocos coastal villages

LEONCIO G. BALBIN JR./PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

ILOCOS Sur Rep. Eric Singson (left) with Candon City Vice Mayor Nestor Itchon and Charlie Lao bring home their sea urchin catch, locally known as "maritangtang."

By Frank Cimatu and Leoncio Balbin Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

SAN ESTEBAN, Ilocos Sur—When Vice Mayor Norman Mendoza went to Japan several years ago, he was surprised to find out that the *maritangtang* (sea urchin) was a very precious delicacy there.

"It was so expensive that they can only put a dab of it on sushi," Mendoza recalls.

He was surprised because maritangtang used to be so common here that residents considered them a pest, hoping not to step on the urchin's poisonous quills as they walked on the beach.

"They littered the seashore by the thousands," Mendoza says.

And then the maritangtang disappeared.

Fisherman Jimmy Bilang, 50, of Villa Quirino, says the maritangtang almost became extinct here in the 1990s because of harmful fishing practices.

Maritangtang, however, is making a slow comeback.

Recalling his experience in Japan where the sea urchin roe is known as *uni*, Mendoza was very receptive when the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources introduced maritangtang culture in the villages of Villa Quirino, Apatot and San Pablo here.

Nearby Barangay Ambucao in Santiago town, however, was the first village in Ilocos Sur to venture into this business.

Mendoza says the town had no capital, but the local government in 2002 provided the cages for sea urchin culture to members of the Villa Quirino Sea Urchin Growers Association to get the business started.

The association uses a four feet by two feet cage with iron bar frames and plastic mesh around it. These are set half-a-foot above the sea floor because sea urchins would die on their own excrement if they are set out flat.

Bilang, the group's vice president, says the group used to build bamboo cages, but stopped the practice because bamboo needed to be replaced regularly.

The provincial and local governments recently provided the 13 members of the association with two more cages.

With the cage problem solved, the next step was to get the larvae.

The BFAR set up hatcheries in Pangasinan and La Union but these were too far, and sometimes many larvae die during the trip.

Other breeders preferred to buy larvae from Santiago and San Esteban residents for P1 each.

The sea urchins are fed almost daily with local seaweed known as *aragan*. The cultured maritangtang, known here as *pupok*, are expectedly more well fed than the *walay* or wild urchins.

"Because the seaweed and the larvae are

SEA URCHIN/ B2-7

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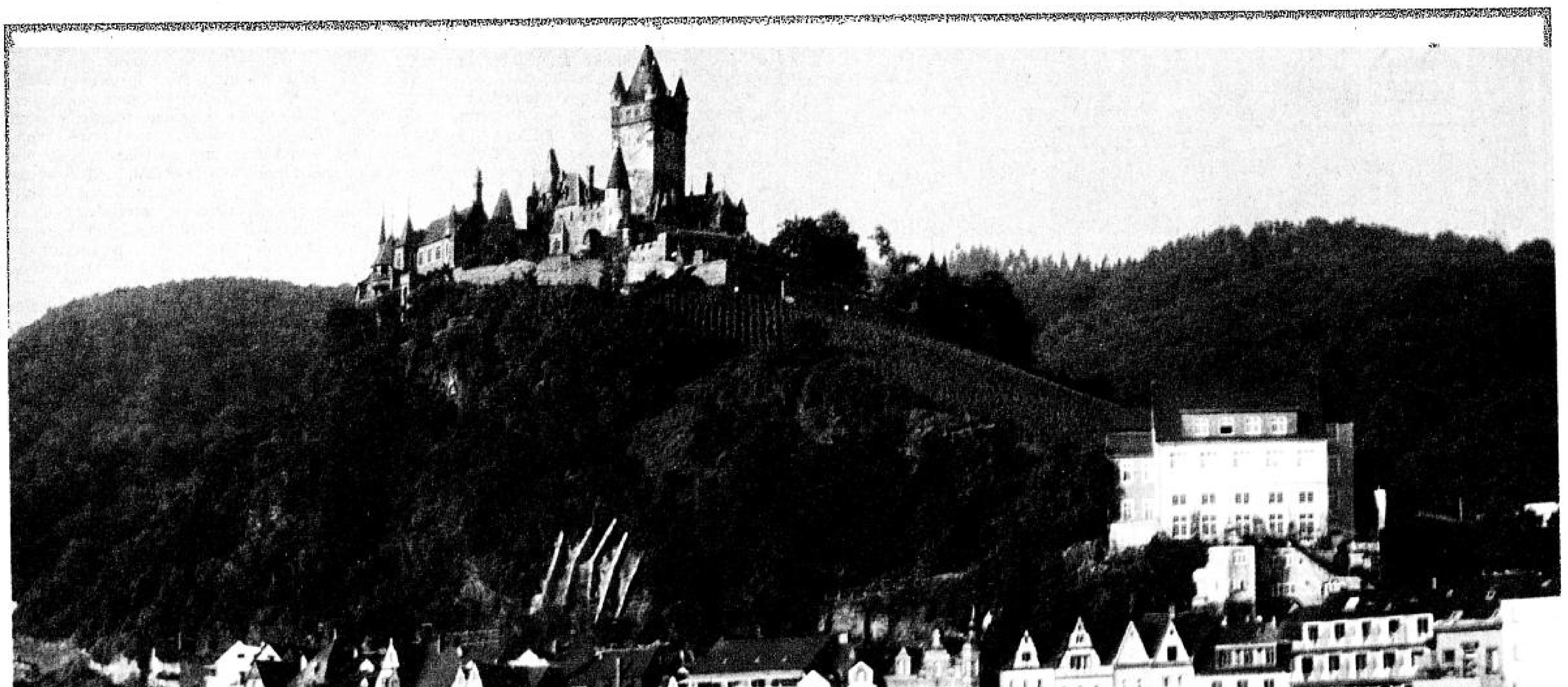

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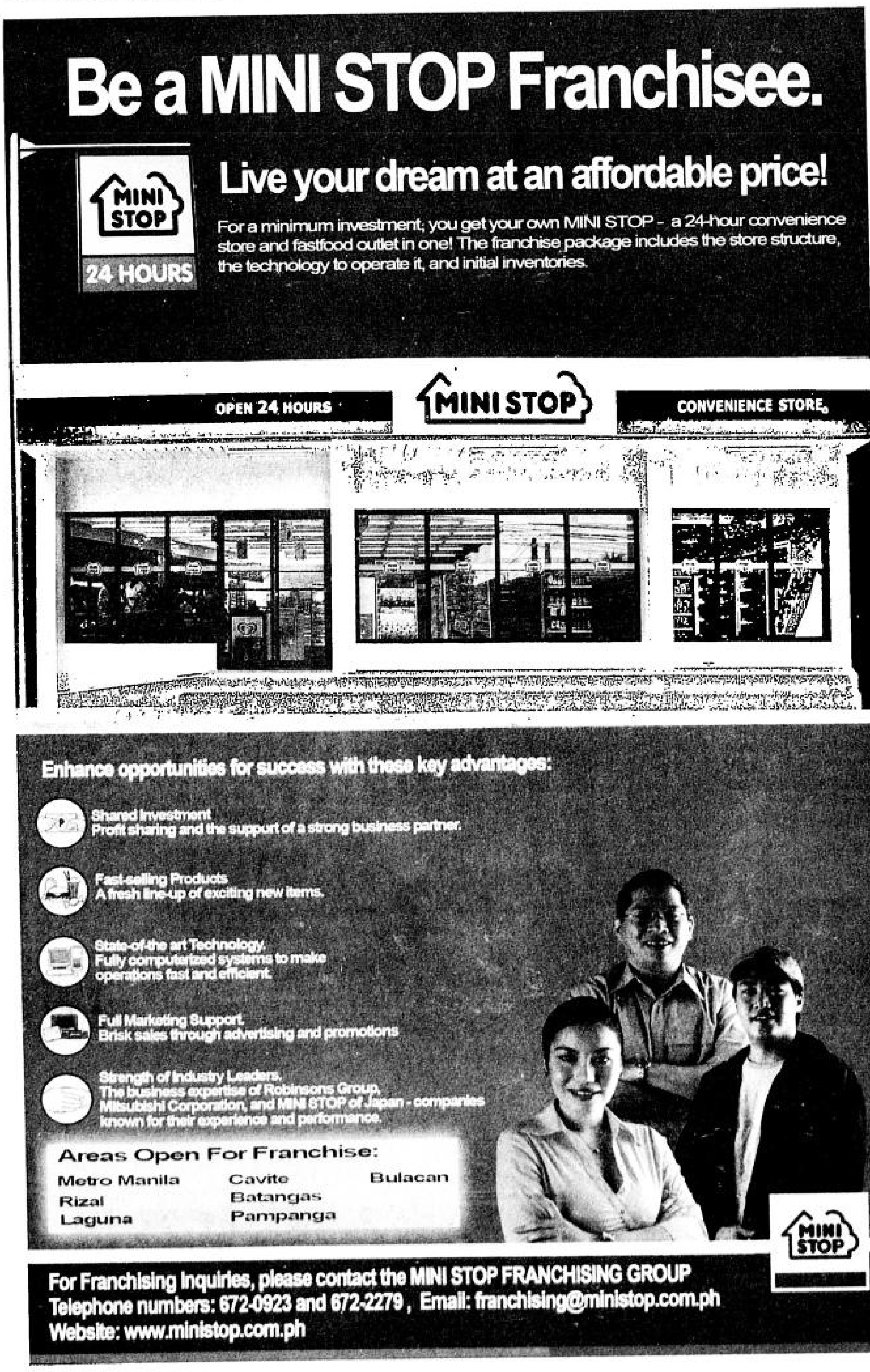
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NTC seeks DTI cooperation vs cellphone spam

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva
Contributor

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission (NTC) recently invited closer cooperation with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) to address mounting complaints on unsolicited broadcast text messages called text spam.

In a letter to Assistant Trade Secretary Norman Hocson, Commissioner Ronaldo O. Solis reiterated the NTC's intention to coordinate with the DTI consumer welfare division.

"In our earnest efforts to address consumer welfare problems encountered by the general public, NTC intends to coordinate with your Department so that these rampant complaints regarding unwanted broadcast messages or mobile spam [that] we have addressed in our memorandum circular may be put to an end," Solis wrote.

The two agencies have indicated readiness to meet on a regular basis on such issues that involve the welfare of the millions of Philippine mobile phone subscribers.

In March, the NTC issued a policy on broadcast text messaging, prohibiting mobile phone operators and content service providers from sending unsolicited commercial text messages to local subscribers without their explicit permission to subscribe them to such a service.

This new regulation adopts an "opt-in" policy on unsolicited commercial text messages or text spam.

The NTC has ruled that only subscribers who opt for such a service should be charged for receiving such messages. Subscribers who do not reply to such broadcasted or pushed messages should be considered to have "opted-out."

Such messages should then be stopped or subscribers allowed to "opt out" without a charge, the NTC rules say. These new rules also state that broadcast messages should not be sent between 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. except for paid subscriptions.

The NTC will also require broadcast messages to display the senders' names and valid addresses or numbers through which subscribers can make a request to stop sending such messages.

The NTC will also require mobile companies to act on spam-related complaints within 30 days after receiving consumer complaints about them.

The new rule on broadcast text messaging will apply to messages sent both on short messaging service (SMS) and multimedia messaging service (MMS).

The Philippines is one of the Asian countries using text or short messaging heavily, with each Filipino subscriber sending an average of 252 messages a month, according to Taylor Nelson Sofres, an international marketing information group.

Do int'l laws put pressure on storage compliance?

By Alexander Villafania
Contributor

NEWS of corporate mismanagement and fraud in Enron and MCI-Worldcom have sparked a series of government-led reviews of laws that should have prevented them.

Some results are Sarbanes-Oxley, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), and Basel II, created to extend risk management, transparency and accountability beyond traditional means.

Two years later, countries are beginning to feel the pressure to comply with these new laws, especially in protecting stored digital databases. Beyond legislation, however, the need to better store and protect data would most likely come from competitive pressure and self-regulation.

"These legislations are fortuitous but not necessary. They had come at the right time when many large companies, seeing the aftereffects of Enron and Worldcom, have sought to improve their accounting measures and protect valuable data from potential fraud and manipulation," says Joel Schwartz, senior vice president of the storage firm EMC.

Schwartz believes that competition and streamlining of stored data are key reasons why large enterprises are using storage devices compliant with the new standards, while implementing a process called "information life cycle management" (ILM), which classifies stored data by importance and frequency of use.

Schwartz said that the new accounting law Sarbanes-Oxley and the healthcare law HIPAA have reaffirmed current trends in corporate data management. In both laws, digital data of accounts and medical records must be secured to prevent manipulation and stored within a certain period in the event that government needs a copy for legal purposes.

"It's the increasing complexities of storage that is a prime consideration among enterprises. These companies want to maximize the use of valuable space in their storage servers by placing data where they are needed. This is the value of ILM," said Schwartz.

In an ILM environment, stored date is initially categorized as unprocessed while it is being read or edited. Once editing is completed or the data becomes permanent, it is moved to another storage device as archived data and is sometimes backed up.

"Some data have to be archived but not backed up. Some need both and this is something that companies are trying to resolve. It will become more complex in years to come and for now, companies are more worried [about] wasting valuable storage resources than breaking compliance laws," Schwartz said.

CA to focus on BPO, banking, telecom sectors

By Abigail L. Ho

MANAGEMENT software firm Computer Associates (CA) will be focusing on the business processing outsourcing (BPO), banking and telecommunications sectors to drive sales growth this fiscal year.

In a briefing, newly installed CA country manager Joy Balmadres said the BPO sector was of particular interest to the company, considering its current level of growth as well as its future growth prospects.

The banking sector, she said, would be another key target area because of the relatively conservative industry's numerous security concerns and database redundancy requirements.

While already performing well in the telecom sector, she said CA would continue to provide specific solutions to this sector as the industry, as a whole, had been aggressively expanding its IT investments.

"Looking at industries where we can offer specific solutions, CA has identified the business process outsourcing sector as a priority this fiscal year. We also intend to strengthen our market share in the banking and telecommunications industries where we have been successfully delivering solutions to for the past 15 years," she said.

Potential geographical growth areas include the Philippines, India and Malaysia due to their thriving BPO sectors.

But as with many other software firms whose main market was the enterprise sector, she said CA would also be expanding its target market to include consumers and small and medium businesses.

"Enterprises will remain our main market, but we are looking at other markets, such as consumer and small and medium businesses, for opportunities to generate significant revenue," she said.

Customer partnerships would likewise be of utmost importance to the company this fiscal year, which started last month, as CA shifts its focus from products and transactions to solutions and relationships, she said.

The software firm would likewise be leveraging on its partners in a bid to further expand its market reach.

In the Philippines, Balmadres said CA would be focusing a lot of attention on Cebu and Davao, two provinces that had been touted as the country's next IT hubs.

She said that for its two-tier products, CA already had partner-distributors in these areas. This fiscal year and onwards, however, CA planned to penetrate these two markets with its enterprise solutions.

In terms of products and services, CA would be exerting much effort, particularly through acquisitions, to grow its market share in the area of systems and security management for the enterprise.

"This is particularly important in a rapidly consolidating market globally and in the Philippines, in which we'll be satisfied with nothing less than the top position," she said.

War refugee puts up Manila's first Vietnamese café

LAOTIAN-BORN Vietnamese-Filipina Leilani Valido-Castillo's childhood memories are filled with a mixture of food and war.

For the most period, her Vietnamese mother, Ba Lan, and grandmother, Ba Thao, spent a good deal of time cooking and escaping armed conflicts—the Vietnam Wars and the Pathet Lao takeover of Laos. But during the more peaceful times, their livelihood revolved around cooking, selling food and operating a restaurant.

Foreseeing the imminent fall of the US-backed Saigon regime to the Viet Cong, they fled to neighboring Laos to relocate their food business. On the long road to freedom, they had to pay their way by conducting cooking classes in the homes of their hosts to equip them with necessary livelihood skills.

In Vientiane, Ba Lan married Pert Valido, a Filipino offset printer operator working under a United Nations project. This is where Castillo, then named Nguyen Thuy Hang, would be born.

For close to a decade, Ba Lan's food business was doing well until the communist takeover forced them to flee for the second time because of the war. The family then moved to Iran where Valido took another work assignment, before permanently settling in Manila in 1979.

After graduating from St. Paul's College, she worked with Philippine Airlines' in-flight service department, and later at an American consulting firm at the Ramon Magsaysay Center.

When the latter closed shop, she put up her own outfit, Lamar Management Services which provides management and consulting services for projects trying to avail of funding from the Asian Development Bank, the World Bank and other foreign official aid.

Noticing the dearth of decent dining places in the vicinity of the RM Center, she opened her pet project in 2003—Cha Gio Café Restaurant.

"To enrich whatever Indo-Chinese legacy she still had, she prepared native dishes and the signature *cha gio* spring roll during her leisure time. So it comes as no surprise that when she put up her food outlet, the house specialty was the obvious choice for the name.

The cha gio, wrapped in lettuce leaves with cucumber and mint leaves, is available in pork, beef and chicken flavors.

"The food we have here is mostly the same ones enjoyed by our family and friends back home, while the other recipes are the same ones we served in Laos," she continues.

Nearly all meals are priced below P100.00.

The resto's signature beverage is the hot cup of *ca phe sua* or the traditional brewed coffee dripping from a perculator and mixed with condensed milk. Unlike Filipinos who take coffee after a meal, Vietnamese drink it as they feast on the entrée.

Capitalizing on the coffee craze sweeping the market, Castillo revealed that Cha Gio hopes to be the first global Asian café.

She has managed to integrate into her menu typical Filipino dishes such as pork and *bangus sinigang*, beef steak, *mongo* soup and *sinigang sa miso*, to name a few.

Cha Gio will soon be up for franchising in three modules—a full-service café and restaurant, a coffee and sandwich bar, and a mobile kiosk.

Cha Gio is at the Ramon Magsaysay Commercial Parking Building, Malate, Manila.

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East West Banking Corporation, one of the country's fastest growing full-service commercial banks, offers two special products that offer superior convenience and higher yields for its depositors -- the Savings Maximizer, which allows clients to enjoy their PDIC-insured savings with yields up to 4 percent interest per annum; and the ChequeMax Plus, which has a tiered interest rate that can go to as high as 3 per cent every year as the balance goes up.

For a minimum initial deposit of P50,000, clients can open their Savings Maximizer Account and take advantage of higher yields as their savings increase. With the tiered pricing scheme, interest rates are accurately computed based on average daily balances and may be adjusted according to market rates at the start of each month. The account comes with a passbook and an optional ATM card for individual account holders for added convenience.

For those who want to enjoy the maximum benefits of maintaining a savings and checking account and still. get good yield, East West Bank's ChequeMax Plus is a must-have. The ChequeMax Plus only requires an initial deposit of P20,000 and earns interest higher than that of a regular savings account depending on the amount balance. ChequeMax Plus individual depositors are also provided with ATM cards for them to easily access their funds, withdraw from their accounts, transfer funds, and even pay bills via any Bancnet ATM. The account also comes with an optional passbook for convenient record keeping. ChequeMax Plus' single account monitoring makes it better than an Automatic Transfer Facility because clients need not maintain two separate accounts.

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Editor **Aries Espinosa**

RP wins gold in World Expo 2005

THE PHILIPPINES beat more than 30 countries worldwide to bag the gold in the Nature's Wisdom Award of the ongoing World Expo 2005 in Aichi, Nagoya, Japan.

This was revealed by Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace H. Durano after receiving the good news from the Japan Association for the 2005 World Exposition, which has yet to announce the schedule of the awarding ceremony.

"We are very happy for winning the gold in this prestigious Nature's Wisdom Award, which can help a lot in promoting the Philippines to the rest of the world," Durano said.

"The award is made even more significant as World Expo 2005 is the first for the 21st century," Durano added.

The award was inspired by the World Expo theme "Nature's Wisdom," which was conceived to attract and encourage people worldwide to seek greater social and technological harmony with nature.

Competing for the award are the participating countries, whose pavilions must be uniquely designed to carry and promote that theme.

The award focuses on the interior and exterior décor of the country pavilions and their exhibits, and how these express the theme of Nature's Wisdom, according to Philippine Expo Commissioner-General Rosvi C. Gaetos.

"The selection criteria include the participants' contributions and efforts in making their exhibits and events at the pavilions promote the theme's purpose and essence," Gaetos said.

Constituting the jury are the president and secretary general of the International Bureau of Expositions (BIE), four members nominated by the Japan Association for the 2005 World Exposition, and three members recommended by the BIE and nominated by the association.

The award-winning Philippine Pavilion uses the coconut as the core of its thematic statement "Usbong: Seeds of Life." This can be gleaned from all seven of the pavilion's major architectural and design components, each depicting a part of the coconut tree.

The façade, which evokes woven coconut fronds, is made of aluminum strips with perforations, from where light radiates to make the pavilion glow at night.

Inside is a sphere housing the Essences Spa, which showcases Philippine indigenous scents and essential oils and serves as a wellness cocoon where visitors experience the health-giving benefits of Philippine-style aromatherapy, massage and other forms of therapeutic healing.

The interior landscape further leads visitors around the pavilion to the Latik restaurant, featuring traditional and innovative Filipino dishes that make up the famous island cuisine of the Philippines; the exhibits of Philippine artifacts that speak of the country's past, present and future; and other interesting materials that highlight the Filipinos' success stories on environmental protection and sustainable development.

"Our exhibits, now made even more prominent by the Nature's Wisdom Award, will reinforce and boost our campaign in Japan to position our country as 'Premium Resort Islands' in every sense of the word," Durano said.

'Heat Wave' cools crowds

HEAT means summer and so were the performance, fashion parade and party at Macapagal Avenue in Pasay City when Blue Wave kicked off with an event celebrating the sunniest season of the year.

People swarmed the Gerry's Grill up to the Krua Thai parking lot even before "Heat Wave" splashed to cool the crowd amidst the hot mood. Some came late but it proved better than not coming at all. Summer comes only once a year, and the event was worth the attendance.

Blue Wave had good reason to keep its guests in a great mood, with an array of local and international cuisine, cozy ambiance, fabulous fashion parade and games. Music came courtesy of R&B specialist Silk.

Car aficionados were also elated. Nissan and Isuzu had their share of the night when they displayed their latest automobile models.

Gerry's Grill, Krua Thai, Great Palate, Hot Shots, Coffee Nook, Haagen Dazs, Hao Fusion and Congee satisfied all palates. "Heat Wave" offered all the elements of a hot night under the fun moon, including a fashion show parading exclusive summer collections.

Models romped in their Arena trunks and swimsuit. Great admiration and applause came for the renowned Olympic swimming gear. Caterpillar showed its primacy in men's fashion with its sporty shoes and casual apparel. The 99 Store exhibited wallet-friendly yet stylish male summer outfits. Street Jeans displayed the denim trendy fashion, while Maldita presented its touchy look on casual summer wear.

Ray Ban provided the show its latest summer styles. Lito Perez, never out of the scene, flaunted his summer creation for males, one of the spotlights of the event.

The event was in cooperation with San Miguel Corp, PCSO, Magic 89.9, Gerry's Grill, Globe Telecom and George Optical.

Event organizer was JAMTRX Entertainment, which also presented a tour and press presentation of the venue.

MEDICAL MISSION IN MARAGONDON

The Public Affairs Service led by its commander Col. JG Cabarrus (PAF) recently conducted a medical, surgical, dental, optical, deworming, milkfeeding and nutrition product distribution including donating electric toothbrushes sourced from the Order of Malta, at Maragondon, Cavite. 2087 patients benefited from this service. Shown is the optical team headed by Lt. Commander Rubi Lim (PN) and assisted by TSgt. Loretta Velacruz and Sgt. Ervin Velacruz dispensing a pair of donated eyeglasses.

Moldex opens expansion phase in Metrogate Sta. Rosa

IN RESPONSE to public clamor for more quality residential homes, Moldex Realty Marketing Inc (MRMI) is pleased to announce the opening of the long-awaited expansion phase in Metrogate Sta. Rosa, Laguna. Lot areas range from 120 to 169 sqm. Buyers have the option of purchasing a lot only or a house and lot package.

According to Louis Icasiano, MRMI president, "no residential site in Sta. Rosa, Laguna at present can match the development standards set by Metrogate Sta. Rosa." This prime property was elevated by up to 1.8 meters of fill to ensure that the homeowners would be free from floods, unlike other places within the general vicinity. It has now become the favorite residential site in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, for which the ongoing fast selling of the newly opened expansion phase attests to this high demand.

Metrogate Sta. Rosa is a premier development set in the heart of Sta. Rosa, Laguna. It is conveniently located along the old National Highway and is adjacent to the soon-to-rise SM Sta. Rosa. It also boasts of a full community and all amenities and facilities are already in place.

Take hold of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity of owning a property in a prime subdivision. Call Celeste or Kim at 522-7777 local 148 or 113. MRMI holds offices at 3/F Golden Bay Hotel, 247 Padre Faura Street corner Roxas Boulevard, Ermita, Manila, and at the G/F Moldex Building, Ligaya Street corner West Avenue, Quezon City.

MHC ROAD SHOW

Dr. Jo Ben Chua (left), a urologist at East Avenue Medical Center, hands over the Men's Health Check (MHC) e-Card to 37-year-old Gabriel Laynes during a recent MHC road show at Valley Golf and Country Club. MHC is one of the patient education programs of Pfizer, which aims to increase awareness on men's health as well as encourages men to see their doctors regularly. The program will also help fight the growing problem of the counterfeit medicine trade, which poses a significant health risk to consumers who unknowingly buy fake medicines.

NEWSDEALERS' SUMMIT

The officers and members of the Print Media Dealers Organization and the Newsdealers Association of the Visayas held their joint newsdealers' summit at the Island Cove Resort recently. The Philippine Daily Inquirer circulation staff was on hand to welcome the delegates. After the summit, the newsdealers were treated to a tour of Printown, the largest and most advanced printing facility in the Philippines, located in Mamplasan, Laguna. Shown are Inquirer SVP for sales and marketing Rene Reínoso (2nd row, 3rd from left), PMDO chair Danny Jose (2nd row, 9th from right) and Newsdealers Association of Visayas president Raymund Mercado (2nd row, 10th from right) together with all the delegates of the summit and Inquirer circulation staff led by AVP for circulation Glo Lardizabal and circulation sales and promotion head Bien Baltazar.

Bits Clips

Sharp Aircon summer promo

CUSTOMERS will receive free electric fans on the spot when they buy any Sharp window type air-conditioning units from participating stores nationwide. Every Sharp window type aircon gives the customer one 16-inch stand fan for free. Take advantage of this summer promo in any Sharp dealers/outlets nationwide until May 31. Sharp air-conditioners are known for their state-of-the-art plasmacluster ion technology that cleans and freshens the air. This means the air not only cools down room temperature, but gets rid of bacteria, viruses, and allergens that usually cause common illnesses such as colds, allergies and flu. Plasmacluster ions also help get rid of unwanted odor coming from cigarette smoke as well as toilet and garbage odor.

'May Madness' at Westin

SUMMER beckons at The Westin Philippine Plaza. "May Madness" comes rushing in as you stay overnight in one of the luxurious rooms for as low as P4,700 new with buffet breakfast for two this May and get another overnight accommodation absolutely free during the month of June. Enjoy access to the 24-hour Sports Club and Spa, a one-stop resort for the body, mind and spirit and use of the hotel's spectacular lagoon-shaped swimming pool amidst the romantic Manila Bay view. For more information and reservations, call 832-6910 or hotel reservations at 551-5555 local 1991 to 1993.

Watsons' P100K makeovers

WATSONS, Your Personal Store, continues to please its customers with the launch of its latest campaign, "Beauty & Brent" (B&B). Ten make-over packages worth P100,000 each and worth over a million pesos will be given away. The promo is open to all Watsons customers, Addict Mobile Prepaid (AMP) and other Smart subscribers until June 1. A minimum purchase worth P150 at any Watsons outlet nationwide entitles a customer to qualify for the raffle. Registration is by simply typing WATSONS REG Amount Purchased/Tape Receipt No./Full Name/ Address/Gender/Age and sending it to 386. On June 6, 10 winners will be drawn and granted individual hair, skin and fashion makeovers. Brent Javier, the country's most sought-after model, will choose one of the makeover recipients to go out with him on an all-expenses-paid date. For more details, text WATSONS and send to 386.

Coffee, biscotti at Edsa Shang

EDSA Shangri-La's Lobby Lounge presents the perfect combination of premium coffee and authentic biscotti until May 31. Translated as "twice cooked", biscotti recipes nowadays include nuts, seeds, dried fruits, chocolate or spices. Edsa Shangri-La's Lobby Lounge features crunchy biscotti with generous portions of pistachio nuts, available daily from 7 a.m. to 12 midnight. For inquiries, call restaurant reservations at 633-8888 extension 2738 and 2739.

STB-P's shopping 'Xtreme'

SINGAPORE Tourism Board-Philippines (STB-P) and MasterCard International team up for the largest shoppers challenge that dares shopaholics nationwide for a chance to become the Philippine representative to the Great Singapore Sale (GSS) International Shopping Challenge. "Xtreme Shopper Search" calls MasterCard holders to flex their purchasing muscles from now until May 31 in three participating malls: Alabang Town Center, Power Plant Mall Makati and The Podium Ortigas. The participants vie for the "Top Spend of the Day", the highest cumulative spend in all three malls, which will be displayed daily at 3 p.m. after the cut-off time. The cardholders with the highest spend record on May 31 at 8 p.m. will be declared overall "Xtreme Shopper", and with two companions, will be the delegate to the GSS International Shopping Challenge from June 23 to 26. For more information, call STB-P at 813-0946.

Product Files

A new look, renewed commitment to excellence

AFTER almost two decades of providing quality managed healthcare services, Medicard turns over a new leaf as it upgrades the look of its corporate logo and membership cards. Renowned for its comprehensive array of healthcare services, wide network of hospitals, doctors, specialists and dentists and an exemplary track record, Medicard updates its appearance to exemplify its renewed commitment to providing its 400,000 membership the unsurpassed healthcare services they need.

While maintaining its distinct blue hue, more profound change can be easily noticed with the stylized Rx symbol-the symbol with which Medicard is recognized. It has been given a 21st century upgrade on a strikingly handsome makeover.

Treasure trove of features

Underneath its impressive exterior lies the treasure trove of features that has kept Medicard members impressed with its healthcare service. From a wide array of services like hospitalization benefits, outpatient consultation and diagnostic services, dental healthcare coverage, emergency care and the preventive healthcare advantage, as well as the network of over 320 hospitals and clinics, 8,500 doctors and specialists and 500 dentists nationwide, Medicard is capable of providing the HMO services incomparable to other healthcare providers-the healthcare you deserve!

With its new look, Medicard reinforces its mission of healthcare excellence that it has been founded on. Now, look forward not only to the peace of mind that a Medicard healthcare program can provide, but to a new look which now matches its multitude of services.

Fulfilling a US soldier's dream

From page B2-1

commercial establishments, and PBM earns more than enough from it to pay the rent for their new office on Remedios Street in Malate, Manila, and finance its operations.

Today, the foundation uses 70 percent of the rental money to pay for the medical treatment of the children, with the balance placed in a perpetual trust fund.

But it continues to rely on donors—corporate and individuals. Recently, PBM found its biggest donor in Philip Morris.

Cardenas says Philip Morris tapped the foundation to evaluate the numerous requests it gets for donations and sponsorships.

PBM got the project as it is considered one of the country's most efficient foundations, and among the most transparent.

"Our reputation is that we are businesslike," he says. "We are known for accountability and transparency. We are highly computerized. We are accredited by the Foundation for the Certification of NGOs and we are used as an example."

PBM agreed to do the task for Philip Morris on condition that the cigarette manufacturing company pay it by supporting two of its programs—operations for patients with cleft lip/palate and hydrocephalus treatments.

A cleft lip/palate operation costs about P20,000 while a hydrocephalus treatment costs about P40,000.

Cardenas says PBM has doctors who provide their services for free. To pay back the medical profession, PBM grants scholarships for the training of some who want to go into cranio-facial surgery.

The dream of PBM is to put up a cranio-facial center by 2010—its 75th anniversary—where plastic and reconstructive surgery can be done to help children with deformities and continue what its founder started decades ago.

Cashew industry fights for survival

From page B2-8

PARC has distributed 4,000 seedlings of high-yield varieties to farmers and some farm inputs for free.

If this becomes successful, they will duplicate it in other municipalities.

According to engineer Elmer G. Ferry, PARC director, they were trying to revive the cashew industry in Palawan.

He said a Bureau of Agricultural Research team from Manila would arrive to develop a cashew research program. A national research center for cashew would also be established in Palawan.

Helen Llavan, a researcher from the Western Philippines University (WPU) in Aborlan town, added that the university was doing its own studies.

WPU has pioneered in the production of cashew by-products such as cashew wine, vinegar, prunes, and cashew fruitcake.

Jofelle P. Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Sea urchin ...

From page B2-3

free, our only capital is industriousness and patience," Bilang says.

They harvest twice a year and a cage usually contains 600 sea urchins.

There is great potential in sea urchin culture but problems remain.

Bilang says typhoons destroy cages if left at sea.

"You have to normally account for a mortality of 100 to 150 in a cage," says Bilang.

Then there is also the problem of having too many urchins. Overpopulation constricts the urchins' movement, leaving them stressed and weak.

Mendoza says some cages contain as many as 800 sea urchins.

Steps are being taken to overcome these problems as demand for maritangtang continues to increase.

Mendoza says that even without advertising, stock is sold immediately. And that's just for local consumption.

Resident Marvin Ong says before the group had the cages, maritangtang already sold for P150 a kilogram. Ten fully mature sea urchins make up a kilogram.

"Because the cages had made them very accessible, they are now sold from P50 to P80 a kilo," says Bilang. A cage full of urchins can then generate a minimum income of P5,000 a harvest.

Mendoza says the group is still planning to sell the maritangtang to buyers in Metro Manila, where its market price goes as high as P150 a kilo.

Selling them fresh in their shell may be counterproductive, however, as sea urchins tend to eat themselves and are thinned out when they reach their destination.

Some growers shell the sea urchin and gather the roe in a bottle, but this brings down the market price.

Other growers also tend to sell out everything they have, not considering leaving a breeder cage for the next season.

These are just a few of the lessons that the locals are learning to get a better handle on the potentially lucrative business.

"Fisherfolk can depend on the sea urchin culture if they know how to cultivate and market them right," Mendoza says.

Tapping a partner for risk management

DUE TO competition and changes in global markets, a major challenge for businesses, especially the financial industry, is to create and sustain shareholder value.

For financial institutions, risk lies around every corner. With little or no warning, businesses can stumble and even collapse because of unexpected events. Growing risk management departments and sophisticated technology have helped companies in financial services to combat many of the more quantifiable dangers, from credit and market risk to such things as regulatory and IT risks.

To prepare itself for handling more sophisticated risks, especially on new products, Allied Bank has acquired a solution that can address this concern. Aimed at better integrating risk and value management processes and capabilities, and stimulating risk and value optimizing decisions at all levels of management, Allied Bank is leading through this risk management pilot project with leading IT services provider Unisys.

Jaime del Rosario, Allied Bank First VP and Head of Risk Management Unit, explains, "We are preparing for 2007. As a requirement, we need to be at par with international standards and I believe that this is an opportunity for us to prepare to handle much more sophisticated products, which require different kinds of expertise, of monitoring, of preparation. By acquiring the Kamakura software, Allied Bank wants to be effective in managing these new products, most especially derivatives. Also, this is part of the bank's response to new regulations of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP)."

With the Kamakura Risk Management System, Allied Bank and Unisys will seek first to address market risk management, liquidity management, interest rate risk management and maximum cumulative outflow. These are the things Allied Bank expects to be satisfied in the short-term but, looking forward, the company hopes to expand to credit risk, operational risk and performance measurement.

In choosing Unisys, Del Rosario says, "We prepared first our request for proposal, identified our needs on the basis of international standards, examined the sophistication of our customers, including the regulations which are now being imposed by the BSP. With these essential things in mind, we solicited proposals from different suppliers and solution providers. Some of them responded positively; but Unisys gave us confidence. They made frequent visits and impressed upon us that they understood our problems better, and were able to offer better advice. That's when we saw the possibility that we can work it out with them, that Unisys can be our partner for this project."

Allied Bank considered Unisys' track record of delivering successful projects for banking and other industries. "The difference in having Unisys is our international experience combined with our local track record and strength. Blend those two and you have a successful project," explains Maurice Locsin, Unisys Philippines Ltd. Country Manager.

Kamkai Tung, Unisys Asia South Practice Director for Banking, proudly comments on the strengths of the Kamakura solution. "Founders of Kamakura are all world-renowned in the area of risk management. Kamakura is a solution that has been implemented and proven many times, in other banks across the globe. The founders are gurus in risk management who have won awards, written countless books, some of which are available in the Philippines. We believe in adding value to Allied's business and forming a fruitful business relationship to assist in achieving their strategic goals."

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- ***Reverse Technology and Trade Fair (16 to 18 June)*** -
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- ***SME Bazaar (16 to 18 June)*** -
Finished products of DTI-assisted companies will be displayed for sale to trade buyers.
- ***Buyer-Seller Encounter (16 June)*** -
Economic zone locators and established assemblers-manufacturers will present their procurement requirements to the local SMEs in a half-day forum.
- ***Industry Forum (17 June)*** -
Experts will discuss the effects of intellectual property rigths; ISO; IMPEX; and packaging on the local SMEs' competitiveness.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:
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Citibank launches Peso and Dollar Checking Combo Offer

The country's largest foreign bank has launched a tempting offer for banking clients - open a peso checking account with at least P100,000 and you can open a US dollar checking account with no maintaining balance.

Conversely, clients who open a US dollar checking account for a minimum balance of $2,000 can get a peso checking account at no minimum balance.

Apart from the convenience of the Citibank Peso CitiBasics and Dollar CitiBasics Checking accounts, clients will also be presented with a complimentary checkbook wallet.

"We launched this campaign to make it more attractive for clients to maintain two checking accounts. This limited offer gives customers the opportunity to sample the unique advantage of having both Citibank Peso Citibasics and Dollar Citibasics Checking accounts," related Sari Pascual, Citibank Vice President for Retail Bank Marketing.

The advantages include convenience of accessing both accounts using one ATM card, the globally-accepted Citibank Citicard. Clients can withdraw up to US$3,000 per day or its peso equivalent at over 860,000 ATMs worldwide including over 3,000 BancNet and MegaLink ATMs locally. Moreover, all ATM transactions at partner ATM networks are free of charge so no need to worry about service fees.

"A Citibank US Dollar Checking will come handy when you travel and need to pay bills. You won't have to exchange your pesos to US dollars every time. There is also the instant recognition that comes with a Citibank check," added Pascual.

Round the clock access is also available via Citibank Online, where banking is quick, easy and secure. Log on to www.citibank.com.ph and check your balances, pay bills, transfer funds, even order checkbooks and have these mailed to you at no extra charge.

Plus, you can also earn interest if you have at least P25,000 in your peso checking account, or US$5,000 in your dollar checking account.

To open, simply visit a Citibank branch and present two valid identification cards. A personal banker will assist you in opening the account, and you can claim your Citibank Peso Citibasics and Dollar Citibasics checkbooks as well as your international Citibank Citicard the same day.

The Citibank Peso and Dollar Checking Combo offer is available until August 31, 2005. For more details, call 813-9124 in Metro Manila or 234-9037 in Metro Cebu.

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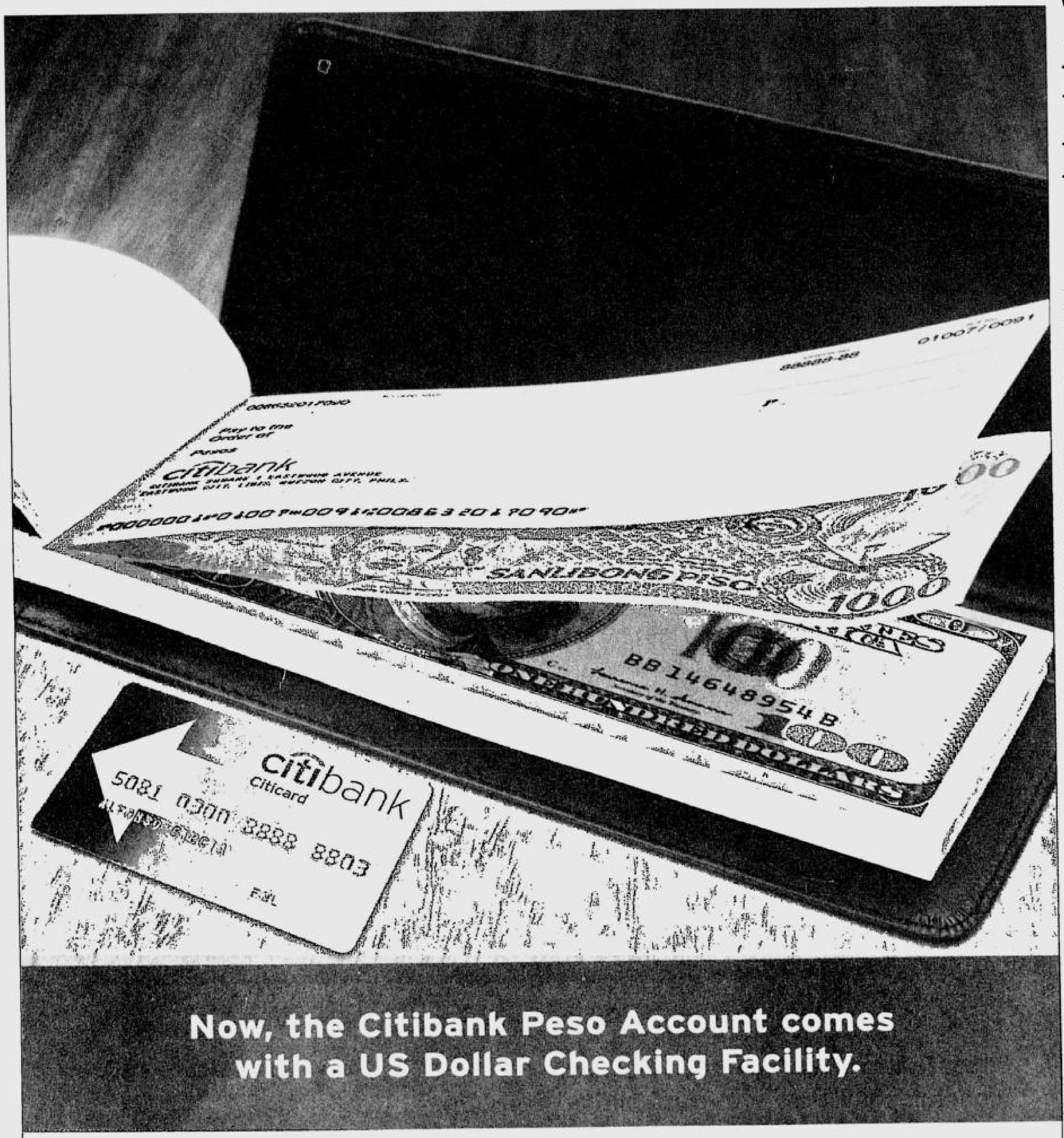

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Enjoy more flexibility on your checking account. For a minimum balance of PhP100,000 in your Citibank Peso Checking Account, you may also enjoy the convenience of a US Dollar Checking Account at no minimum balance. You can access both accounts with your Citibank Citicard (ATM card) FREE OF CHARGE from over 3,000 ATMs all over the Philippines and over 860,000 ATMs worldwide.

You may also choose to open a US Dollar Checking Account for a minimum balance of US$2,000 and enjoy the convenience of a Peso Checking Account at no minimum balance. The choice is yours.

Open your Citibank Peso and Dollar Accounts* now!
Visit any of our Citibank branches or call 813-9124 in Metro Manila or 234-9037 in Metro Cebu.
Promo runs from May 16 to August 31, 2005. See flyers for details.

Per DTI NCR Permit No 2687, Series of 2005

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CASHEW wine, comparable to sweet wine from grapes, is produced by the Western Philippines University in Aborlan, Palawan.

JOFELLE P. TESORIO/PDI SOUTHERN LUZON BUREAU

Cashew industry fights for survival

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Stakeholders in the cashew industry are scrambling for ways to prevent the business from meeting the same fate as Palawan's dead mango industry.

In a recent cashew industry forum initiated by the Budyong Foundation, farmers and sellers said one of their problems was the scarcity of planting materials for cashew.

The good varieties that have high and quality yield, like the Mitra and Recto, are not readily available, they claimed.

Forum participants also observed that cashew production was not considered an industry, but a sideline for farmers.

Hence, government support was sorely lacking.

Unlike in rice or mango production, they said many cashew farmers think that after the trees are planted, they no longer need extra inputs and efforts to make these crops yield.

But the greatest threat so far was pests, like the mango pulp weevil.

According to a retired employee of the Department of Agriculture, there are pests and diseases in cashew plantations in Puerto Princesa City and Roxas town that could pose serious hazards to the precious cashew seeds.

He described the pest as "kernel-boring," or they go inside the shell of the seeds without leaving a trace outside.

The participants fear that if this worsens, it would mean the collapse of the cashew industry.

Meanwhile, the price of processed cashew kernel in Palawan remains high despite available supply.

Cashew nuts currently sell for between P300 and P350 a kilo in the market.

Export

Most of the cashew bought by traders are brought to Manila or exported to other countries.

The cashew vendors said it was not surprising to know that cashew nuts sold in Antipolo are even cheaper than the ones sold in Palawan.

This despite Antipolo having no cashew plantation. Most of its supplies come from Palawan.

The vendors complained that the playing field was uneven. They could compete if they had more capital, but as loan interests get higher, they can only do so much.

They said summer was the best season to stock up on cashew seeds to save for rainy days, but there was not enough supply.

The cashew sellers also pointed to the transfer of the transport terminal in Barangay San Jose in this city as an emerging problem.

Because the terminal is far from the downtown market, "runners" of big traders get first crack at the increasingly scarce cashew supply.

Solutions

In preparation for the cashew summit in June, the participants proposed solutions to the identified problems. Foremost of these was full government support.

"We don't have a mango industry anymore. The cashew industry should be prioritized by the government," said another participant during the open forum.

The DA has instituted a program called "plant now, pay later" where farmers could get seedlings and pay only 25 percent of the cost and handling from the nursery to their farms.

The participants also suggested that there should be other varieties of cashew seedlings to choose from.

Farmers' cooperation was also encouraged, so they could easily avail themselves of technical inputs from the government.

Representatives from the Palawan Agricultural Research Center said they have a "Kasoy Project" being undertaken, with Roxas town as the pilot area.

CASHEW/B2-7

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LIFESTYLE

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MONDAY **ARTS & BOOKS** • TUESDAY **FITNESS** • WEDNESDAY **2BU**

Galicano wins top international portrait prize

ROMULO Galicano with his winning painting

After a brushoff from the country's own embassy in Washington, the portrait artist holds high the banner of Philippine creativity by winning the grand prize in the annual Portrait Society of America international derby

By Rod Paras-Perez
Contributor

ONCE a year, the over 2,000 members of the Portrait Society of America meet to exchange views about art and pay homage to a few outstanding painters. For 2005, the site is Washington, DC where, aptly enough, the National Portrait Gallery serves as a beacon of excellence.

Artists from all over the United States and countries like Sweden, France, China, Australia, the United Kingdom and more compete in a grand derby of portrait painting that guarantees the emergence of only the best. Like: Entries are cut down from over 2,000 to 1,000 then to just 13 finalists from all over the world.

Romulo Galicano is among the 13 finalists for 2005.

Flying to Washington for the conference, Galicano also must rush shipment of his entrée—the Portrait of Eddie Chua, a friend of long standing.

At the exhibition site, Galicano looks at the other 12 finalists, gets really bowled over by their excellence and gets his stomach all knotted up from tension all through the night that he had to take pills to calm down.

Galicano looks at the work of John Michael Carter (later awarded the Honor Award) and feels his gut growling all the more. He looks at the work of Paul Newton of Australia who is in the collection of the National Portrait Gallery of Australia or that of the Latino artist Tony Fro or the entries from China—and a virtual rock concert starts in his stomach.

'May laban tayo'

Still, Galicano looks carefully at the works and whispers to his fellow Pinoy artist, Ed Lantin, "...*may laban tayo*." Galicano notes that most of the works, although done with virtuosity, did not have weight or what Berenson calls tactile values, that unique sensation of heft given by a painting.

During the awards ceremonies, Galicano is indeed a tightly tensed spring, slowly relaxing and with hopes soaring as the names from the 13 finalists rolled until finally the announcement " ...and now, from the Philippines—the grand prize—Romulo Galicano..."

Congratulations and testimonials start pouring—mostly from fellow artists, all strangers to Galicano but all art kin now. The art guru and 2003 Grand Prize winner, Robert Liberace, greeted him with, "Romulo, congratulations! You are an amazing artist, you are really a master." John Howard Sanden, the more than famous New York artist, extends his welcome, "...If you have the chance to go to New York ... pass by my studio. I am interested to see some of your works. Romulo... you are indeed a great artist!"

However, it was the artist Bart Lindstrom who made the more memorable comment—sensible and playful: "Your painting is not just a portrait painting... It is a product of art... The composition has a dramatic impact, very daring, it has a sense of contemporary mood... really a work of art, Romulo... You are an amazing artist..." And suddenly he shouted, "Get out of here!" followed by a naughty smile and a thumbs-up sign.

Triumph abroad

In 1884, Juan Luna gave the Philippines its first cultural triumph abroad. And the King of Spain, no less, feted him, and the Filipino community celebrated the event, with Jose Rizal leading the *brindis*.

GALICANO/ C4

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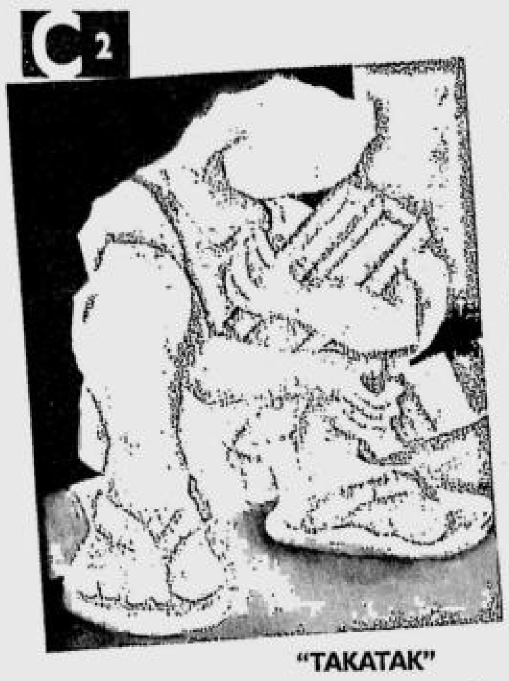

"TAKATAK"

Faceless beings and chiseled bodies

By Gary Devilles
Contributor

THE HUMAN body has always been an object of control and manipulation since the 18th century in Western Europe, according to sociologist-philosopher Michel Foucault, Capitalist industrialization has dehumanized it.

The condition is succinctly articulated in the paintings of a young artist, Dario Villaceran, who is holding "Sacred Whispers," a joint exhibit with Gonzalo Uy at One Luna Gallery. In Villaceran's works, the human body is the articulation itself, its deformity a critique and gesture becomes a stark reminder of loss and desire.

Villaceran uses acrylic to depict humdrum incidents of common people with the seeming absence of faces and the protrusion of angular feet and chiseled bodies. Such rendition has profound ideological implications especially now when the world stands helpless on all questions concerning the worker and the reality of poverty.

Villaceran paints the ordinary event replete with contradictions. A father desires to be reunited with his son at the end of the day ("Pasalubong") and yet viewing that faceless father, one cannot help but have a sense of scruple over what could have been taking place in his head. It is as if by concealing the face, one is automatically thrown right away at the heart of alienation where desire coalesces to pain and longing to vision.

The faceless father is indeed the face of a thousand fathers who have to struggle on the day-to-day basis in order to support their families amid the deteriorating economy of the country. Facelessness is the result of alienation where the individual is stripped of his essence. Facelessness becomes the trope for the abstraction of worker as his labor-power is bought and is in turn used to exchange for other commodities.

In "Pasalubong," the father brings balloons as gifts to his son. The balloon might as well be an apt signifier also for the contradiction in the economic system. What the father earns is used to buy for the balloon and other things needed by the family. The balloon may appear to be a palpable material and yet it contains nothing but air. Soon, the balloon loses its air in the same way that other commodities lose

FACELESS/ C3

MAKE ELECTRICITY
CONSERVATION A HABIT

With the cost of living in Metro Manila expected to rise even more as a result of fluctuating oil prices in the world market and the recently approved VAT, consumers are compelled to make do with their meager incomes and find ways to lower expenses.

To help consumers lower their electricity bills, the Manila Electric Company has been urging its customers to follow simple energy saving measures at home.

"We all should develop a habit of conserving energy," said Mike Lopez, Meralco's marketing head. "There are so many little things we can do that can actually save us a lot, like turning off lights when not in use. It's very simple but you'd be surprised how many people forget to turn off their lights when they leave a room for instance or turn them on even when there's daylight."

He urges consumers to realize that while the rising cost of basic commodities and other products and services cannot be avoided, expenses can still be lowered by being more prudent in using these products.

Here are some practical energy-saving tips that Meralco regularly disseminates to its customers.

LIGHTING
Use natural light whenever possible.
Clean bulbs regularly. Dirt lessens illumination by as much as 50%.

REFRIGERATOR
Place refrigerators at least 4 inches away from the wall giving the motor room to breathe.
Make sure refrigerator doors are sealed tightly to prevent cold air from escaping.

COOKING
Use flat-bottomed pots and pans on the electric stove to hasten heat transfer.
Turn off the electric stove during the last minutes of cooking. Let the remaining heat simmer the food.

IRONING
Do all ironing at one time.
Ironing during cooler hours of the day helps lessen the demand for electricity during peak hours.

WASHING MACHINES
Do not over-wash clothes. Delicate clothes do not take as long as dirty work clothes.
Hang clothes to dry on sunny days.

Other Appliances
Turn off and unplug unused transformers and voltage regulators.
Transformers consume more electricity when they heat up.
Keep appliances well-maintained. They operate more efficiently and use less energy when they are in good working order.

For more energy saving tips, visit www.meralco.com.ph

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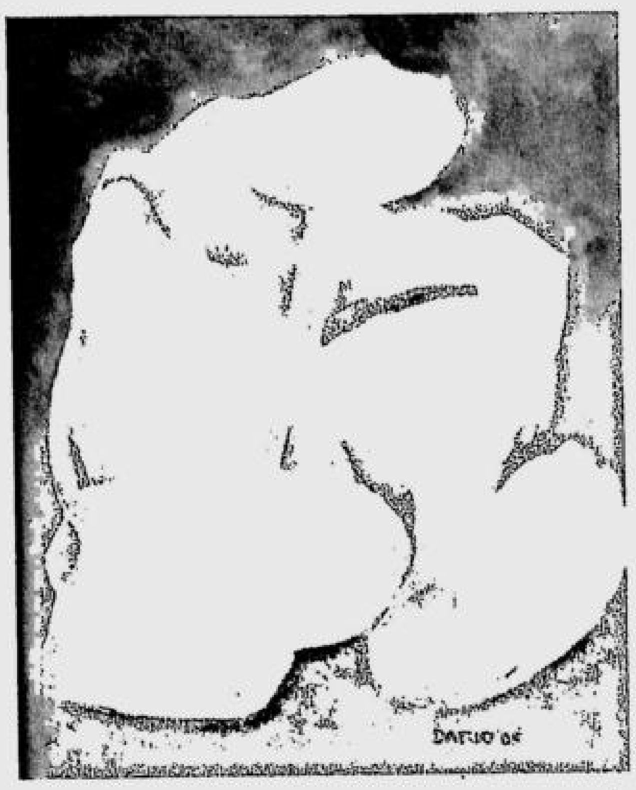
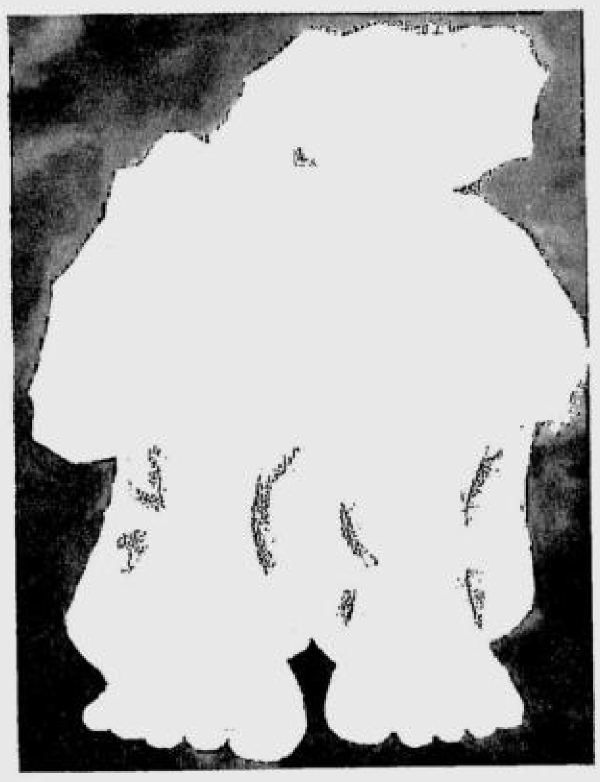
MERALCO



"KEEP the Change"



"FIG Express Green"

In his exhibit at One Luna Gallery, Dario Villaceran presents works on the human condition

Faceless beings . . .

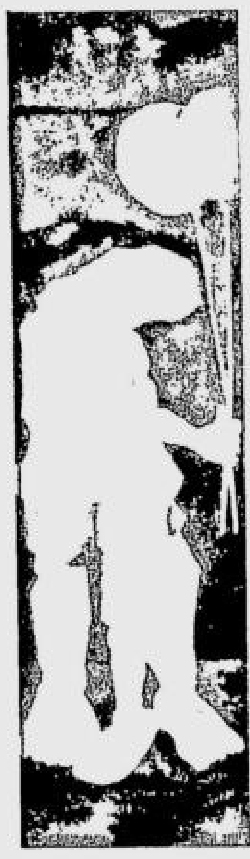
From page C2

their significance and use while the worker continues to work hoping to be rewarded, although in truth, he works towards his effacement.

Effacement

Man's effacement can also be taken to mean the tendency of people to be immune in the contradictions of their everyday life. They either have resigned or refused to see the total picture. Nowadays, when emotions are cheaply manufactured by media, people have difficulty expressing genuine emotions and as a result, became anesthetized or insensitive to the plight of workers.

But in the world of Villaceran one cannot help but be summoned back to our degrading reality. Such summon is nowhere felt more real than in "Keep the Change," where a faceless man contemplates a penny he's holding. This painting is Villaceran's version of Rodin's "The Thinker." But in our situation the thinker is almost reduced to destitution, unable to reconcile his contribution to society vis-à-vis the power of capitalism. He lives by on minimum salary which is always kept on the minimum so that he lives in between paydays. He has no way out.

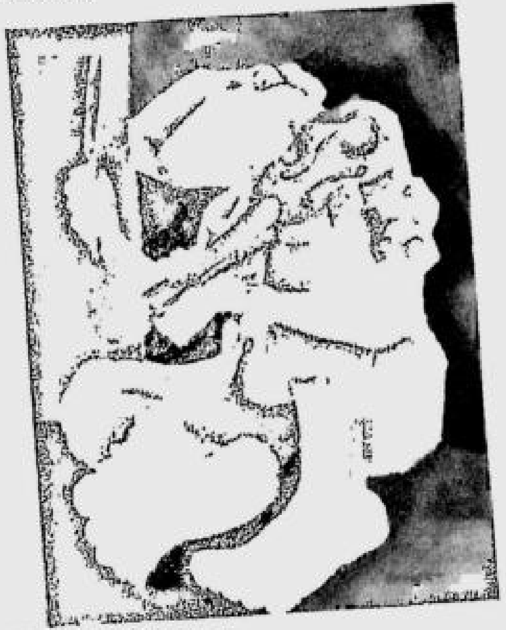


"PASALUBONG"

Man's loss of freedom is the perennial theme of Villaceran's works that must be reconstituted as a historical desire for liberation. It must be understood that our dehumanization is a historical phenomenon that no less than José Rizal himself had actually experienced and witnessed during his time. Somehow, Villaceran's "Nawawalang Tsinelas" becomes a fitting tribute to Rizal because of an apocryphal story about the young Rizal losing his sandals while playing along the riverbanks. In the story, we learned that Rizal upon losing his sandal decided to throw the other sandal as well on the premise that a pair of sandals will be more useful than just one sandal, to someone who finds it. Hence, "Nawawalang Tsinelas" must also be understood in the light of our reality of oppression vis-à-vis the reality of emancipation.

Villaceran reminds us of what Rizal did and situates us also in the condition that Rizal was in. In effect, the painter is asking us what to do. Perhaps time will eventually commit us all to action, but for the meantime, Dario Villaceran will paint the everyday life we all know too well.

"Sacred Whispers" is on view at One Luna Gallery, One Luna Lifestyle Center, Eastwood, Libis, QC until June 13. Call 8622246 or 0928-2188516.



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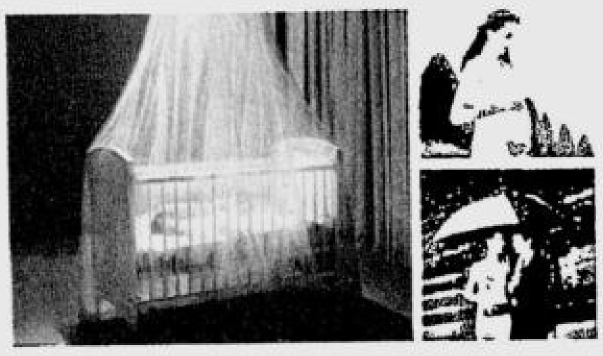

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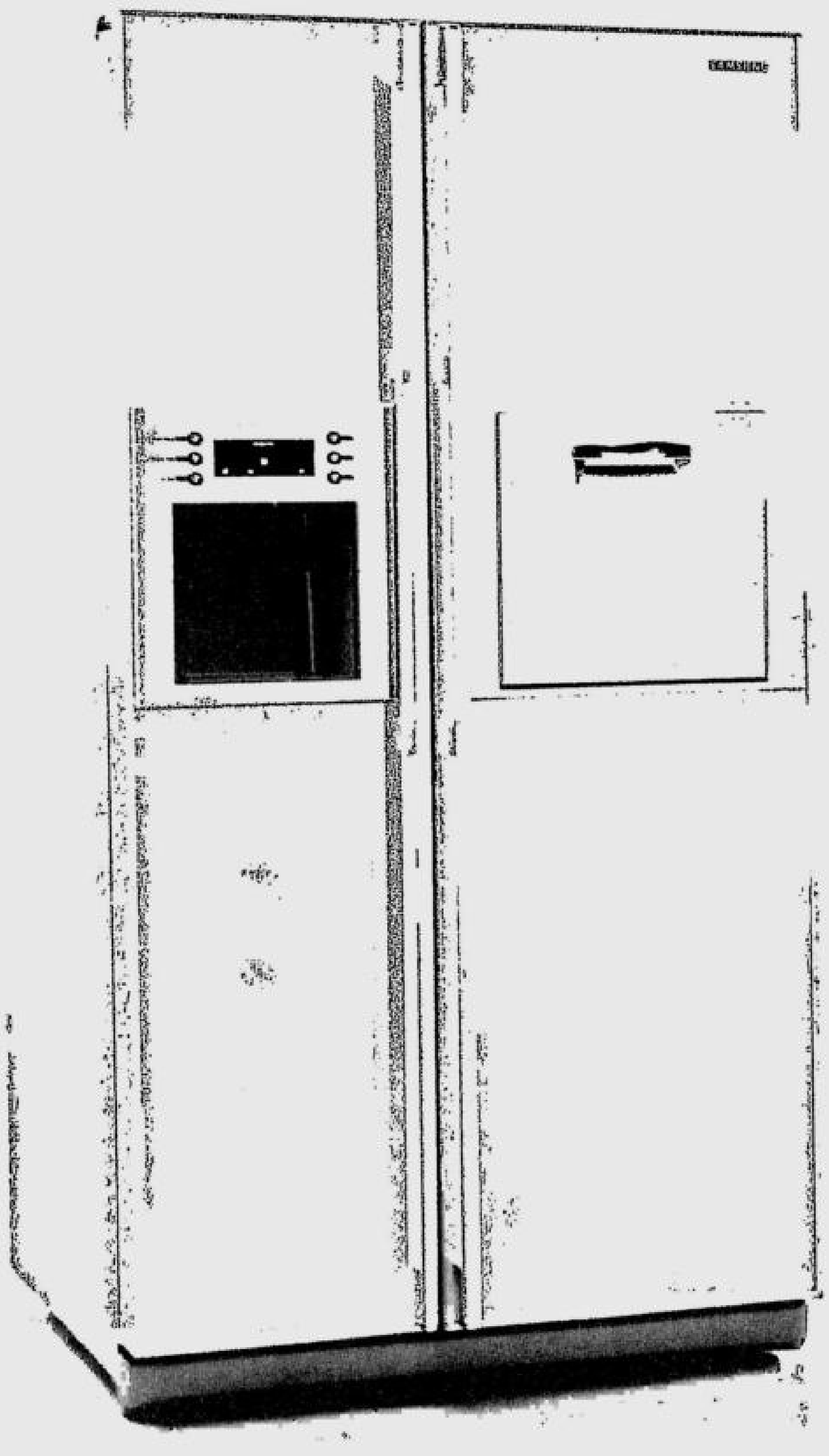

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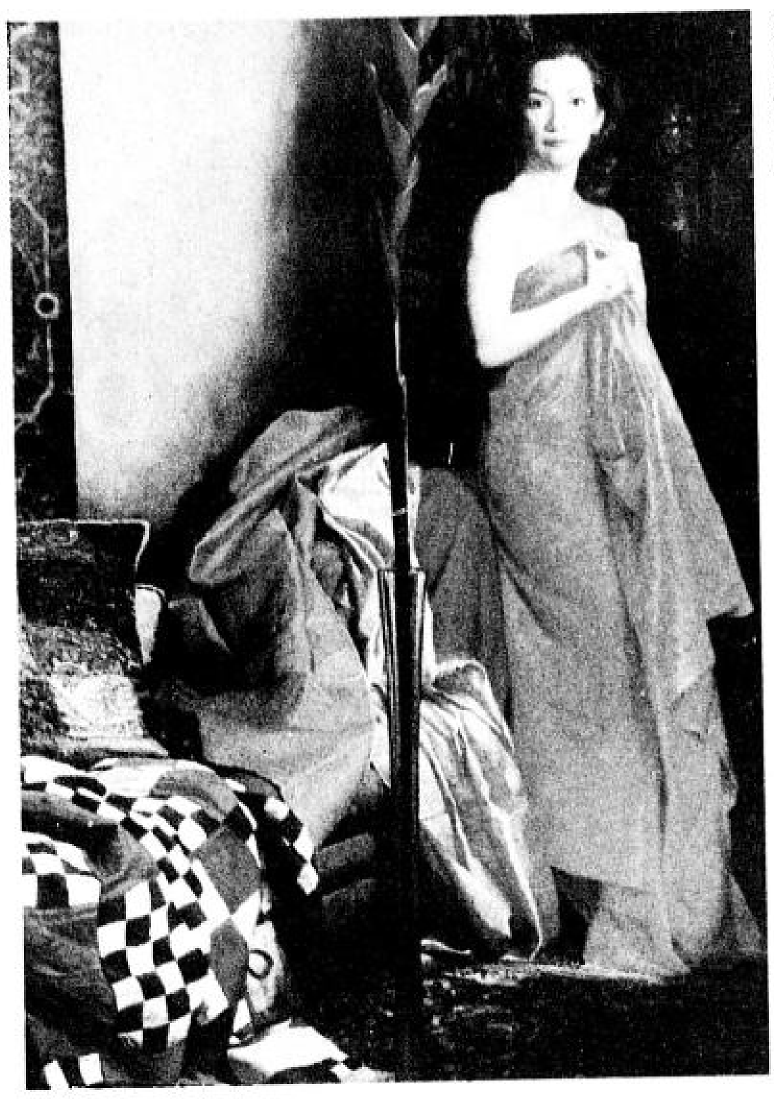


"PORTRAIT of Marissa Concepcion," which earned a merit award during the 2004 International Portrait Competition held in Boston, USA

THE LUCKY 13 finalists at the 2005 International Portrait Competition. Seated at the center is Romulo Galicano.

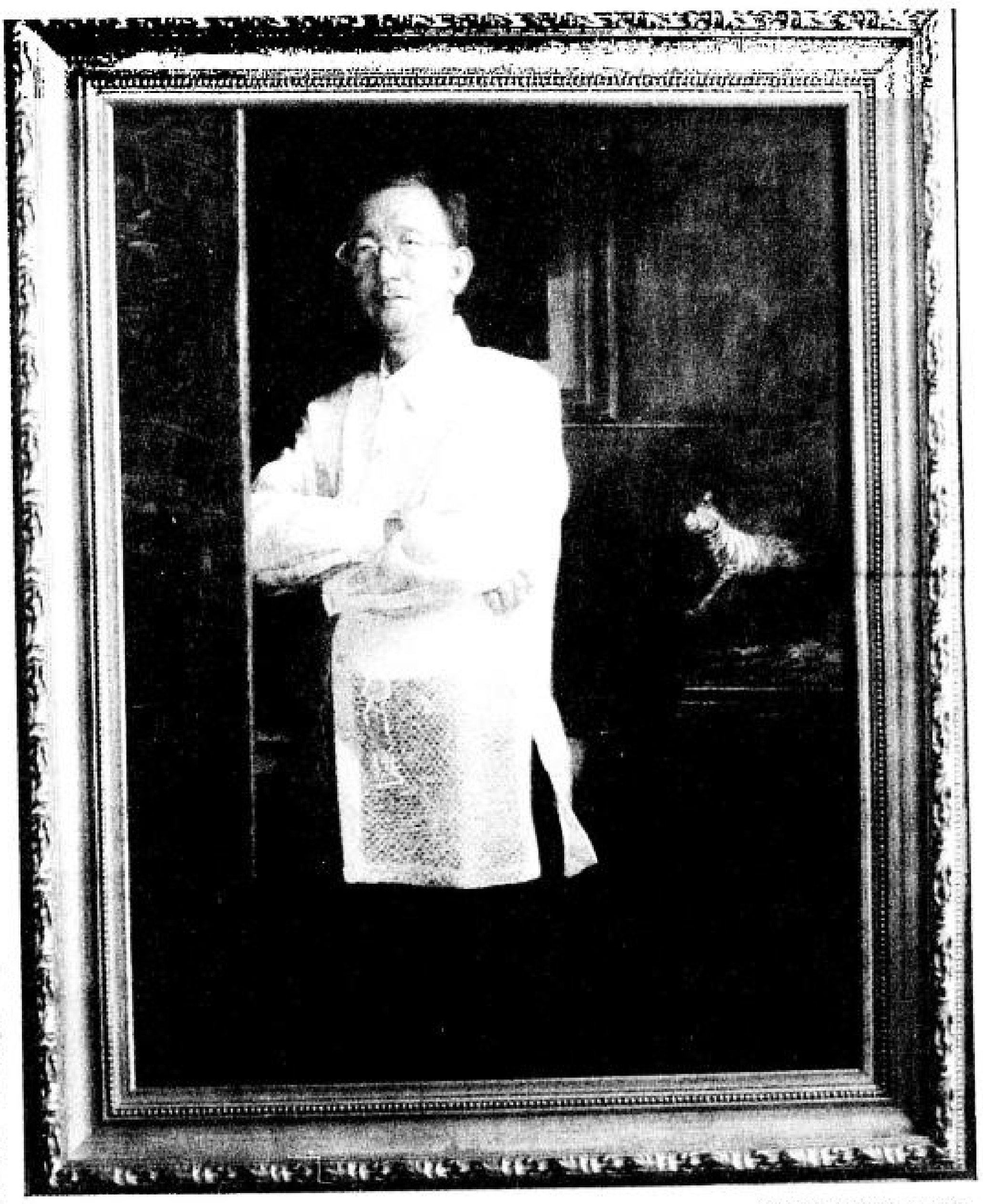
Galicano wins top international portrait prize

ROMULO Galicano with John Michael Carter, honor awardee in the 2005 International Portrait Competition held by the Portrait Society of America

From page C1

But our times are different. Galicano went to the Philippine Embassy in Washington, DC as a courtesy. He got a diplomatic brush-off from a certain Hjayceelyn Quintana, first secretary and consul, presumably for cultural affairs, but more busy acting as a glorified receptionist for visiting officials. Culture is simply not her cup of tea. Perhaps her job description should be more reflective of her sensibilities.

Like Luna before him, Galicano opts for the more classical roots of art, but with an eye focused on the contemporary scene—more so in terms of composition. Vide: Galicano, like Newman before him, insists on vertically dividing his format and with equal intensity—paints reality with rigor. It is a contradictory stance highly reflective of Galicano's roots in Cebu, particularly Carcar. A deep respect for tradition; a longing for the urbanism that is embodied by Manila and what Galicano has—the will to work for what he wants.



"PORTRAIT of Eddie Chua," by Romulo Galicano, grand prize in the 2005 International Protrait Competition in Washington, DC.

FAMOUS art guru and judge John Howard Sanden with Galicano

Galicano greeted his well-wishers in Washington, DC like a traditional *ilustrado*—in a black suit over an untucked barong. It is an image far removed from the young Galicano of Carcar walking through the whole town hawking fruits or whatever, his wooden clogs clacking on the asphalt road in the fast, robot-like waddle he developed because his three bosses—his grandmother, his aunt and his mother—kept him on the streets running all sorts of errands that somehow, never got synchronized.

Struggles

And deeply etched in Galicano's mind was the remark of his grandmother's acquaintance who, upon seeing him taking off for Manila, asked: "What will you do now—you lost your carabao?"

Indeed, he worked like a carabao selling fruits and what-nots for his kin—but he also made time for art lessons with Martino Abellana, the town's premier artist. Galicano learned the craft of painting the same way the Old Masters did: by doing chores in an artist's studio.

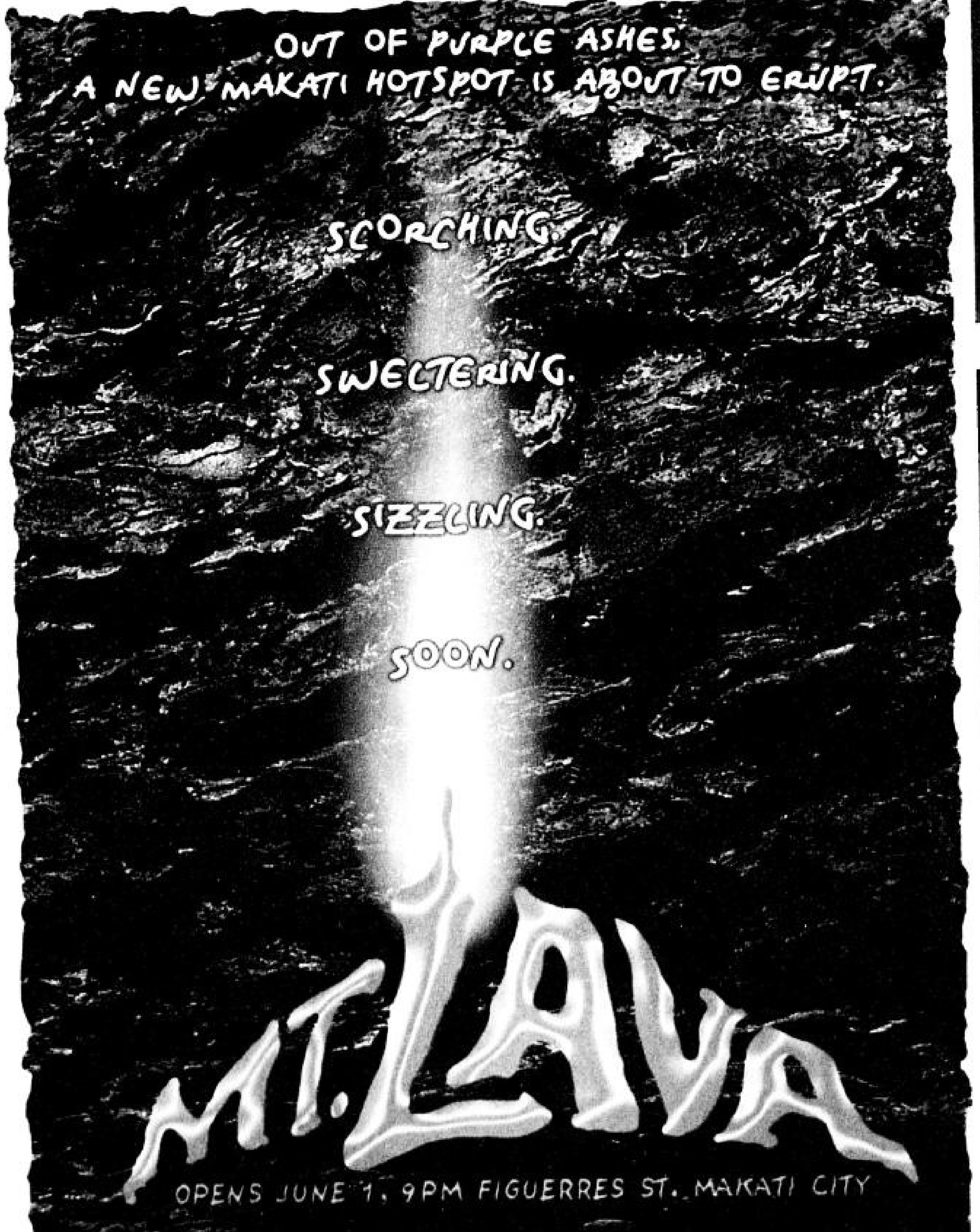
In Manila he pursued art by boarding with his mentor—friend from Cebu, SY Mendoza, formally enrolling in art schools when possible—but always, working to support himself.

Thus, self-reliance and determination were forged in Galicano's outlook. And, into his art.

Galicano's Grand Award for Portrait Painting may be a narrow road—but it is now a road that stretches from Manila and all the way to the US and the world.

And—with each award comes more responsibilities: no longer confined to his art and himself—but to all that boundary-less realm called artworld. And—to that unique cultural ursprung we know as Filipino.

Juan Luna, F.R. Hidalgo and a few other artists maybe useful lodestars, but ultimately, every artist must define his own trajectory.



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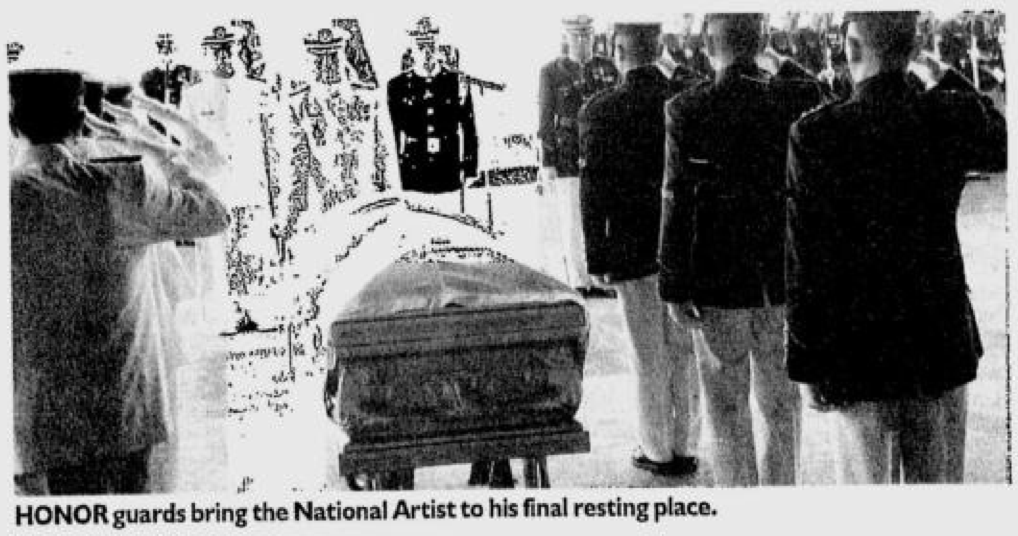

HONOR guards bring the National Artist to his final resting place.

CONFETTI on National Artist's coffin. Overhead is Ang's self-portrait.

PHOTOS BY RODEL ROTONI

'Maraming salamat, Ang Kiukok'

By Ding Roces
Contributor

IT SEEMS not too long ago that I was forever stuffing myself with gastronomic Chinese lunches with National Artist Ang Kiukok (his first name is Kiukok but most everyone called him Ang) during marathon interviews I had with him in 1998 for a monograph. He certainly looked hale and hearty then, in fact quite youthful for his chronological age.

In my files are three video tapes covering a total of nine hours chatting with Ang, aside from more than 20 hours of taped interviews with his colleagues. Ang was not an easy subject to tackle, being your proverbial Sphinx. But when you got to know him, he could be outspoken and humorous.

On the other hand, his paintings rage and scream with anguish. Look around you. Can you blame him? Ang's publishers turned my monograph on the artist ("Deconstructing Despair") into a hefty, three and a half kilo (7 lbs) coffee-table book to outweigh all coffee-table books, and it bagged the Manila Critics Circle's National Book Award on Art in 2000.

Ang's elevation to National Artist in 2001 is a journey from his father's Chinese *sari sari* store in Davao to a worthy place in the nation's cultural pantheon.

His acceptance speech at the National Artists Award ceremonies was vintage Ang: "*Maraming salamat*" (Thank you). The shortest speech in the history of the National Artists Award. I am not quite sure how comfortable the shy, taciturn, departed Ang will now be, what with all the jazz of a state funeral and his ashes rubbing ashes among "heroes" in the Libingan Ng Mga Bayani, but I am certainly proud this country gave him that recognition. Now I am left to wonder, what does a chronicler of pain and sorrow paint in that happier, other universe?

The National Artist's wife receives medal from NCCA chair Ambeth Ocampo.

NATIONAL Artists Alejandro Roces, Eddie Romero and Arturo Luz

Saling Pusa at West, Sillada at Ricco-Renzo, Sayrit and Lee at Mag:Net

VISUAL ARTS

WEST Gallery features Saling Pusa's "12:00" until June 18 at West Avenue, QC. The show presents the new 30" x 40" works of Rolly Acuña, Elmer Borlongan, Manny Garibay, Mark Justiniani, Erwin Leaño, Tony Leaño, Neil Manalo, Joy Mallari, Ferdie Montemayor, Andy Orencio, Jim Orencio, Anthony Palomo, Mikel Parial, John Santos, Gemo Tapales and Cris Villanueva. Call 4110336/ 4119221.

RICCO-RENZO Gallery mounts Danny Sillada's "Everything and Nothingness" until June 27 at LRI Business Plaza, 210 N. Garcia St., Bel Air II, Makati. Call 8982542-43/ 8982545.

MAG:NET Gallery Paseo presents Joy Dayrit's "Erasure" on June 2-30 at the ground floor, Paseo Center, Paseo de Roxas cor. Sedeño Sts., Makati. The artist paints images on canvas with the intention of eras

SALING/ C7

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But where's the painting?

By Constantino C. Tejero

HERE is another art exhibit that should raise the hackles of traditionalists. This is only the latest instance where an artist defiantly expresses his concept of art in public and dares those who may ask: Is it art?

The exhibit in question is Felix Bacolor's latest show "Paintings," 13 pieces in acrylic in glass-and-wood box frames lined with canvas on one side, in West Gallery at the Artwalk, L/4, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

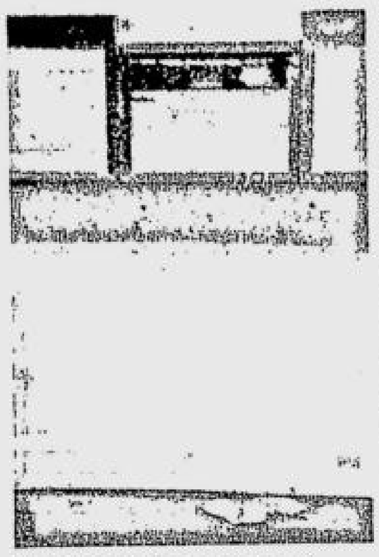
A large amount of acrylic paint of various hues has been funneled into the boxes in varying depths, forming bands of color behind the clear glass. The funnel has been left sticking out of one box, and there are drippings of dried paint on the floor, as if the project were abandoned at the last minute.

The artworks were created in the gallery while the frames were being mounted, just a day or two before the exhibit opened. One can imagine how they looked different every day as they changed their appearance, from the opening day when the paint was still wet until the day it dried.

The idea, says the exhibit note, is for the artworks to appear as spontaneous and freewheeling as possible. The artist is here concerned with "the immediacy in art-making, combining the spontaneity of installation and the inventiveness of painting."

Drawn-out battle

The pieces' titles are self-explanatory: "Black Painting," "White Painting," "Red Painting," "Gray Painting," "Orange Painting," "Blank Painting" (empty canvas in frame), "Yellow Painting," "Light-Blue Painting," "Yellow-Green Painting," "Pink Painting," "Light-Yellow Painting," "White Painting" and "Purple Painting."



"YELLOW Green Painting," by Bacolor

No need for an interpretation, or further discussion. But where's the painting?

Well, if you look harder, you'll locate it somewhere on the wall.

Because, seen as a whole, these bands of color in boxes actually form a whole spectrum with the white gallery walls serving as palette or canvas, as it were. Here the artist is merely playing with "the power and versatility of color."

One can safely say then that this show is not actually an exhibition of paintings but one large-scale installation occupying a whole gallery. But if the artist still insists these are really paintings, then this is a different kind of painting, quite different in form from "the traditional, two-dimensional artworks we'd normally see hanging on the wall."

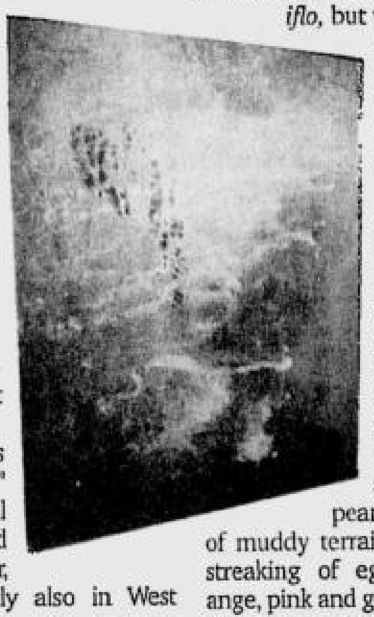
Bacolor took up Studio Arts, major in Painting, at the University of the Philippines College of Fine Arts. Quite naturally then, he engages in Conceptual Art, something that traditionalists still refuse to consider art.

This battle has long been drawn out with still no truce in sight. It's really just a repeat of that noisy engagement of the conservatives and the 13 Moderns some decades ago.

"ABSOLUTE Obsolete," by Achacoso

It's not hard to imagine then that sooner or later Bacolor's kind of art would be seen as old-fashioned and even rendered academic. For now, it looks promising.

Recondite aspect



Ronald Achacoso's art represents the more recondite aspect of abstraction. A graduate of Fine Arts, major in Painting, from University of the Philippines, he understandably succumbs to the singular attraction of the avant-garde to UP art students.

Consider his "Recent Works," 12 pieces in oil and canvas and acrylic on paper, displayed recently also in West Gallery.

These works, says the exhibit note, deal with "the oscillating relationship between representation and abstraction." Instead of explicating that premise, however, the artist appears to be muddling the issue, rendering his art even denser.

The centerpiece "Labyrinth," showing a hazy circular form in yellow and pink, could be encapsulating as well as metaphorizing the exhibit's theme. But, is it a solar or lunar disc in an eclipse? A target bull's-eye? Or just an outline of a color wheel? As it looks, the piece is more labyrinthine than the artist's intended meaning.

"Fragmented Anecdotes" is a series of six small pieces with letterings, geometrics and numericals stenciled on the canvas. The figures are closely cropped, outlined or highlighted, and colored yellow-green, gold, red, pink, orange, brown, blue, black, gray or fuchsia on planes of turquoise, violet, red, umber, yellow or green.

Here the painted surface is supposed to be "virtual linguistic sites that chart the otherworldly regions of the archetypal." But how? And why? The fragmentary stenciling reads *1976, atomic config, verit, iflo,* but we don't see how these are related to archetypes.

Personal symbolism

"Rumored Demise" consists of three large pieces of related images: squarish cobwebby spattering of yellow, orange, flame-red; spattering of turquoise and slate-green appearing like a top view of muddy terrain; and cobwebby streaking of eggyolk-yellow, orange, pink and gray.

The note says the works suggest "remote shadowy spaces encrusted with half-hidden symbols and submerged imagery." If that's really the case, then it is personal symbolism at best, which only the artist can perceive.

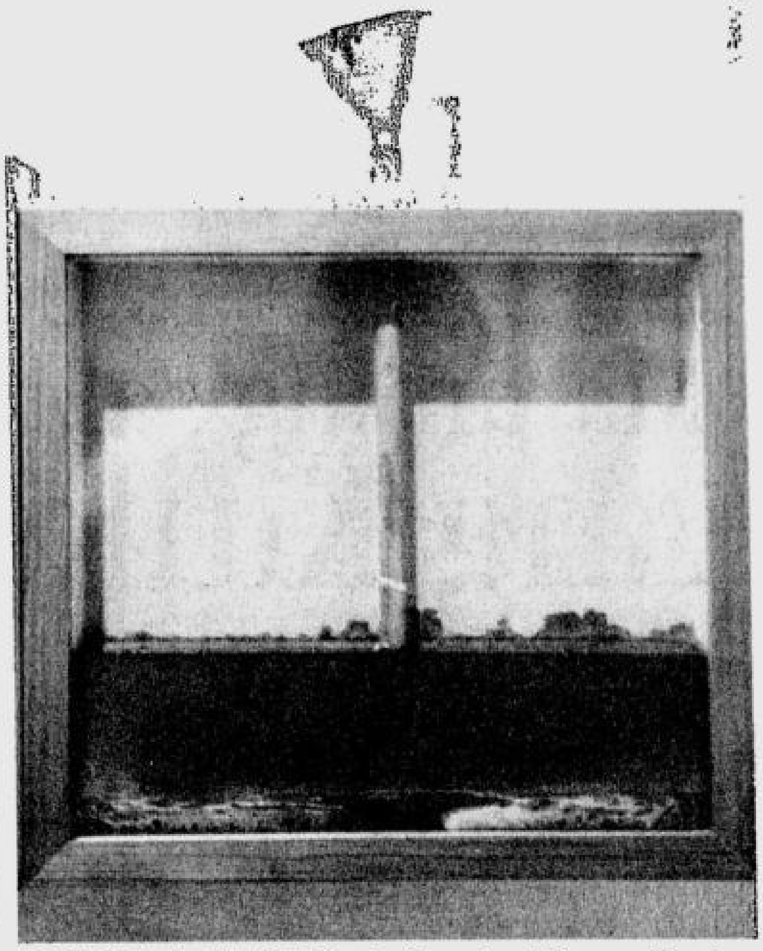
The imagery is a mere hint, which only the artist can clarify. And the titles—which demise? whose demise?—only succeed in rendering the subject or theme even more recondite.

"Absolute Obsolete" and "Obsolete Absolute," as their titles suggest, are also related in look. Those titles either make sense or nonsense—we don't really care about the play on words.

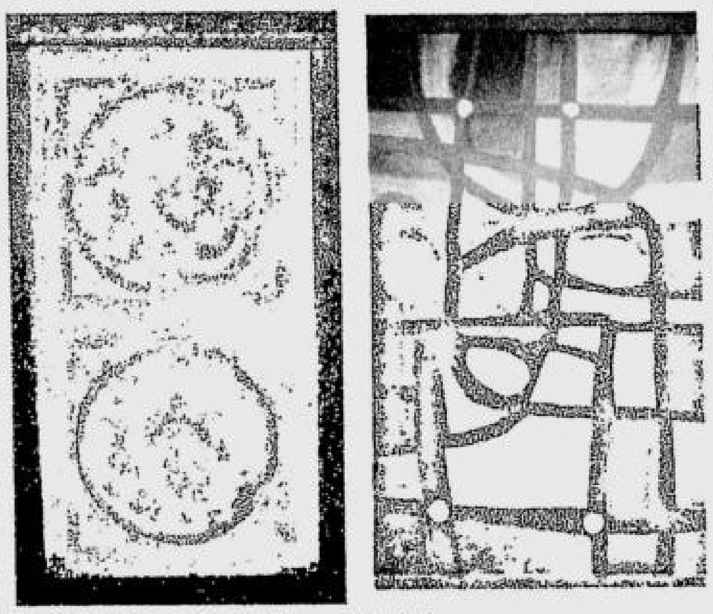
In both, the canvases are filled with monochromes bordered by bands of gradated hues. The first is in old rose verging on violet, bordered by light green, red, aquamarine, turquoise and ultramarine. The second is in red bordered by orange, violet, leaf-green and yellow-green.

The titles of Achacoso's previous exhibits hint at his fondness for themes and subjects concerning the primitive, the primal, the elemental: "On the Origin of the Species," "Cycles and Decay," "Descent of Man," "Monkey Trial," "Terrain," "Aboriginal Sin," "Shaded Region," "Memento Mori," "Bestiary."

As to how well he has succeeded in realizing and illuminating the theme, one can see for oneself. The common viewer can appreciate these things on a visual level even without the intellectualization.



"GREEN Painting," by Felix Bacolor (above); and "Rumored Demise I," by Ronald Achacoso (below, left)



ARTWORKS probe the "normal" mind.

Tajanlangit's states of mind

By Paul Blanco Zafaralla
Contributor

THE PAINTINGS of Romeo J. Tajanlangit Jr. exhibited at the Pasig City Museum this month clarify the workings of the human mind, if on a subnormal state. Such minds are generally construed as problematic, erratic, unpredictable, disorderly, confused.

But as a mental health nurse at the National Center for Mental Health, Tajanlangit has had the rare opportunity to study such minds—at first hand at that—from the vantage point of health science. And this is where he becomes a man unto himself, a man apart from the rest of the visual artists in the Philippines whose formulations on the workings of the human mind are at best a guessing game.

His works have no affinity with the cannons of the classical art, ab initio. Emphasis, tension and release, harmonious relationship of line, shapes and colors, as well as visual/pictorial denouement for a cohesive whole in the classical sense, are all subsumed under the aegis of spontaneity if at all. Where shapes in shocking colors stare the viewer frontally, like these were pasted on with intimations of either advancing or receding movements, a line or two, or blurbs of colors criss-cross vertically or horizontally like an afterthought.

In other instances, color contrasts obtain the initial reaction being that the composition is ready to fall apart. This pictorial presentation, devoid as it is of any recognizable outside referent, probes the so-called "normal" mind conditioned by established laws of color coherence. And a generalist view of order.

This is where the works of Tajanlangit establish their difference from the abstract pieces by the other abstract painters in the country. They probe the minds of very special people who are all but cast out by normal people (including, most painfully, by the members of their families), and society in the large. Such special minds, Tajanlangit's works assert, are joined together and animated by a force—an abstract force equated with either spontaneity or solitude in a paroxysmal situation.

The pencil drawings are a different genre altogether. The figures are generally athletic, ledger-like, quasi-cubistic with this identity: They intimate roundness. Tajanlangit has a firm control of his medium pencil—and can clarify his thoughts not about very special people this time, but about humanity caught in a world of conflict.

Harvest of art

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

FOR THE MERRY month of May, Galerie Joaquin has assembled a show of 60 paintings and sculptures by 25 artists to commemorate the season of fiestas, the National Heritage Month and the Farmers and Fisherfolk Month. The art pieces invariably delve into the harvest theme—from flowers and fruits to *palay* and fish—an auspicious celebration of earth's abundance that takes place at this time of the year before the monsoon rains and a slew of typhoons set in.

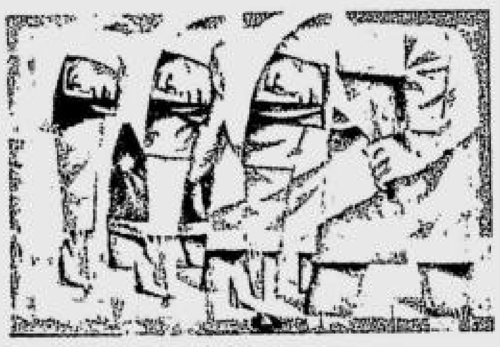
As expected, the Guevarra artists of Galerie Joaquin went to town in depicting the theme dear to the Pinoy heart, and in the process incorporating their usual trademark styles. While the subject of harvest scenes may prove to be too confining to configure with brush and paint, artists with plenty of imagination have admirably responded to the challenge, as they scan and scour the breadth and length of what Nick Joaquin aptly calls the manifold land.

Among the senior artists—Tam Austria, Angelito Antonio and wife Norma Belleza, Mario Parial and Andi Cubi—it is Parial who wholly succeeds in infusing a truly celebratory mood with his suite of festive images, his mother-and-child icon backdropped by bountiful farm produce. While Antonio chose to depict the fisherman with his catch, Belleza has de rigueur homely women vendors, all caught in a welter of wild tropical blooms and fruits. Cubi, on the other hand, reiterates his passion for romantic realism with his melancholic watercolor and oil paintings.

In a large assembly dominated by colorful works, Bayani Ray Acala's "Mariang Kalabasa" is disarmingly charming in its child-like rendering of a folk heroine, though the artist has to learn to polish his handling of appendages. Jerry Morada's "Two Women Harvesting Flowers" has female subjects in a dream-like scene, nymphs seemingly caught in a floral maze. Bernard Vista's harvest scenes, peopled by hardy folk with perennially bent bodies and oversized extremities, are just as visually engrossing in their delineation, a unique twist that has helped boost the Pakil-based artist's stocks.

The younger artists—Richard Arimado, Rellie Liwag, Vincent de Pio—are just as amusing with their own versions, which they interpret in a variety of ways and moods. With his focus on the brawny fisherman, De Pio zeroes in on the strength and fortitude of the folk who brings the marine products to the marketplace.

Not to be outdone, Michael Cacnio, a brass sculptor who is scheduled to do a show in Singapore next month, gives a preview of his growing dexterity with the medium. Two pieces stand out—"Salambao" and "Buko"—both for their well-wrought narratives, and their combination of invention and experimentation. Cacnio, though, has to thoroughly polish his pieces, as the smudge from paint and varnish shows.



"ANI," by Bernardo Vista

Two relatively emerging artists from the distaff side—abstractionist Karina Baluyut and Eileen Escueta—provide a touch of whimsy to the otherwise steely presence of the male-dominated cast. Baluyut has an elegant monochrome painting on the grainy crop shown jutting out from the abstract surface while Escueta reworks the harvest motif from a bigger perspective of land, sky and atmosphere, a refreshing sight compared to the contrived and predictable images popularized by commercial craftsmen.

GSIS art contest

The 2005 GSIS Annual Painting Competition has for its theme "Pista at Pasinaya: Celebrating the Filipino," which drew hundreds of competitors in both professional and student categories, who must have found the cash prizes (doubled from last year) too tempting to resist.

The temptation to conveniently stick to the parameters of the contest theme likewise yielded a plethora of literal-minded products, many of which were sorely lacking in imagination and invention.

The student participants proved to be more daring than their professional counterparts, and, driven by a more vigorous and restless spirit, sought to create new modes of interpreting the theme. Jaypee Samson, a senior fine arts student at the University of the Philippines, romped off with the first prize in oil painting, with his work, "Mas Masaya Kung Nandito Ka," where he elaborates on his by now familial portraits, a series that also won for him the Metrobank Art and Design Excellence in oil-based medium last year.

In the manner of a snapshot, Samson's work shows a large family of 11 members, belonging to three generations, posing in front of their suburban house. The only clue of a fiesta taking place is the cropped view of buntings hanging above the rooftop. Samson, 21, is an excellent portraitist who works along the two-eye level in painting the human figure, whose work radiates a deep sense of intimacy and estrangement.

The second prize honors went to John Paul Antido, for his oil painting, "La Celebracion de Fiesta Filipino." A former UP fine arts student who had moved to AMA Computer College, Antido created an early version of a tourism map, which shows the origins of the various festivals that are still being celebrated today, and with a pair of models wearing turn-of-the-century apparel. The painting is the handiwork of painstaking research and preparation, qualities which recur in Antido's work "Lumang Galing, Bagong Sining," which bagged the grand prize in the 2002 Art Petron contest.

JAYPEE Samson with his prize-winning work

Third prize went to Melvin Arlegui, a cinematic treatment of the boy ascending the pole in the game of the *palo sebo*.

Honorable-mention winners were Jonathan Salvatierra, Amador Barquilla, Christopher Lloyd Valera, Rommel Jose Asis and Guerrero Habulan. The most striking of these, and could have been a top winner in my own reckoning, was Habulan's "Pasan Ko ang Mundo," an allegorical oil painting depicting the battle between good and evil with the Nazareno feast in Quiapo as leitmotif. The work alludes to the devotional fealty of the Pinoy who for one fleeting day fulfills his promise to the Nazarene. Habulan, who is fascinated with the Pop art lingo, is a gifted realist who has lived up to his genes, being the son of leading SR artist and mentor, Renato Habulan. It will be interesting to see father and son together in a show at the Big & Small Art Gallery later this year.

In the professional category, the top winner was Rodelio, better known as Toti Cerda, for his stunning watercolor piece, "Sama-sama, Kayang-kaya," which shows a stage with children donning costumes of characters from various festivals in the country. Known for his children portraits, Cerda has ingeniously used the various attractions of the fiesta to harp on a nationalistic goal, as shown in the acrostics, "Ako'y Pinoy," shown being flashed by the tykes on stage.

Second prize went to Rolando Gumba's "Pista ng Pagkakaisa, Sa Musmos na Mundo ng Sto. Nino," an unexpected winner executed in abstract expressionist style, with hardly a trace of the fiesta motif. Third prize went to Bernardo Hermoso's "Lead the Children to the Height of Hope and Glorify the Creatures for the Abundance and Prosperity, Let's Dance and Celebrate."

Honorable-mention winners are Norman Dreo, Orly Ypon, Alexander Roxas, Noel Pama Sr. and Jorge Villamar, who all interpreted the theme in their uniquely praiseworthy ways.

E-mail the author at gdormiendo@yahoo.com

Saling Pusa at West, Sillada at Ricco-Renzo, Sayrit and Lee at Mag:Net

From page C5

ing them. Call 8177895.

MAG:NET Gallery ABS mounts Romeo Lee's "Pope Lee I" on June 3-25 at The Loop, ELJ Center, ABS-CBN Compound, Eugenio Lopez Jr. St., QC. The paintings are layered with thick globs of pure color to produce dystopic landscapes. Call 4100995.

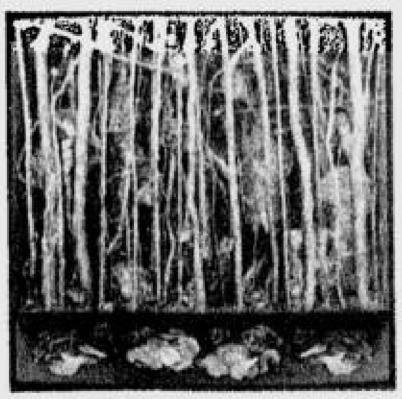
THE CULTURAL Center of the Philippines showcases Salvador Ching's "Eggcology" on June 2-July 17 at Bulwagang Fernando Amorsolo. Admission is free. Call 8323702.

ALLIANCE Francaise de Manille features Maxine Acker's "Installation, Sculpture and Video Exhibit" on June 6-30 at 209 Nicanor Garcia St., Bel Air II, Makati. Call 8576921.

CRUCIBLE Gallery mounts Jonathan Olazo's "Crime and Decoration" until June 12 at Level 4, Megamall A. With a penchant for the unexpected, his works reflect the thoughts of an inquiring mind, never satisfied with convention and always digging deeper into issues. Call 6356061.

THE UP Vargas Museum presents "Picturing Painting Photography based Paintings" on June 16-July 30 at The Edge Gallery. Guest curator Nilo Ilarde gathers paintings and installations inspired by or remarks upon the mechanically reproduced images found in photographs and other photo-based materials. An Artists' Talk with Ilarde and the 11 artists will be held during the exhibition. Call 9281927.

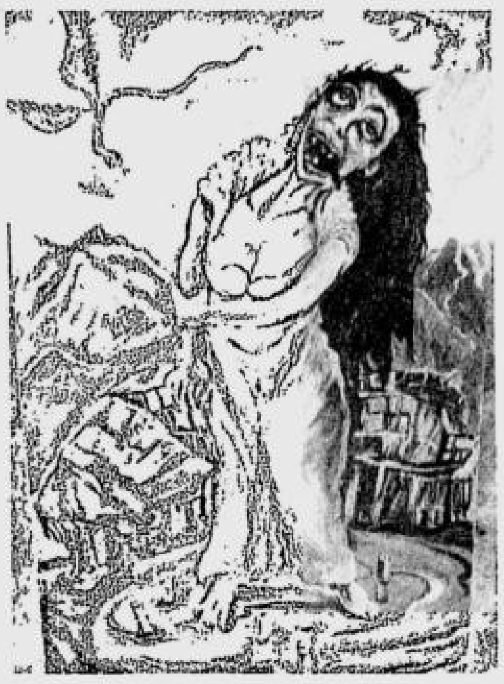
GALERIE Y presents Manuel Baldemor's "Stockholm Horizons" until tomorrow at the third level of Glorietta 4, Makati. The show of mixed media paintings features the colors and sights of Sweden.



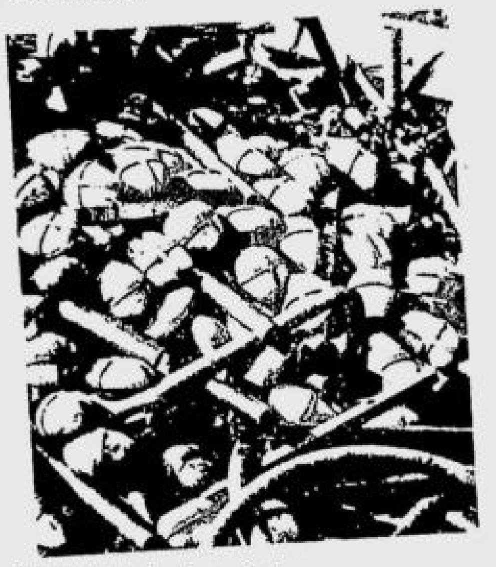
"LANDSCAPE Painting Under the Viridian Sky"

FINALE Art Gallery showcases Amy Aragon's "Surprise Party" until June 17 at SM Megamall. The artist combines 2D and 3D representation—flat surfaces and impasto in her small and large-scale oil paintings. Call 8125034.

IN "MAQUILING Revisited," Alfredo Juan Aquilizan's show at Galeria Duemila until June 28, the artist looks back at a place he called home for over 10 years. Call 6343261/ 8319990.



UNTITLED by Romeo Lee



MAXIME Acker installation

Nilo Santiago exhibits works in US

NILO M. Santiago will hold an exhibit, "Family Ties," at the Art League Gallery in the Torpedo Factory, Alexandria, Virginia, USA on June 9-July 3.

Santiago is a Manila-born artist and he obtained his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at the University of Santo Tomas. He moved to the United States in the early 1960s and took graduate studies at Howard University in Washington, D.C. He has been a constant winner of art competitions both in the Philippines and the United States.

Santiago has had over 20 solo shows and has been in over one hundred group and juried art competitions.

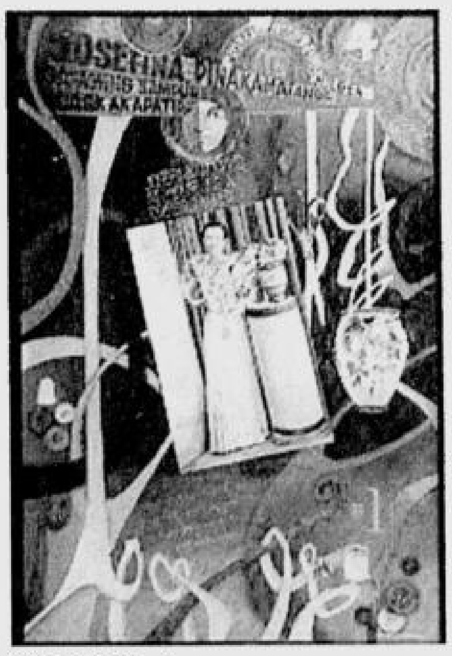
In 2005, Nilo received the Dakila Award for Art and Culture from the Philippine-American Foundation for Charity in Washington, DC.

As board member of the Philippine Arts, Letters and Media Council (PALM Council), Nilo has exhibited in and curated PALM's Annual Art Exhibit, one of the major activities of this group, based in Washington, DC.

Since its first exhibit in 1988, the event has always been held as part of the celebration of the Philippines' National Day on June 12.

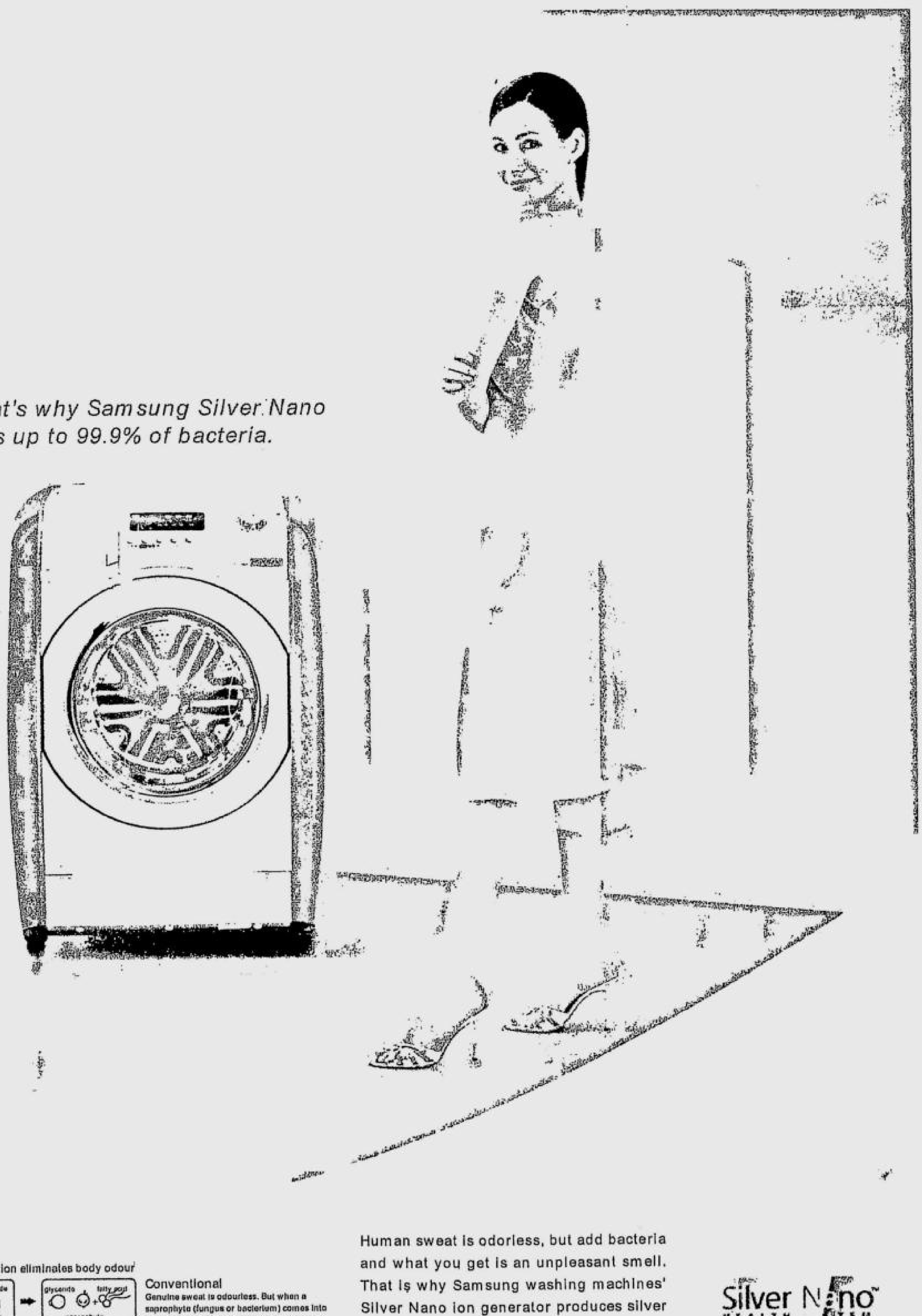
PALM was founded in 1987 upon the initiative and inspiration of the late Bienvenido Santos, novelist, essayist and poet. The late artist Pacita Abad was one of the original founders of PALM and her works have been exhibited repeatedly in its June exhibits.

This year's PALM exhibit, titled "Kalayaan," will open at the Martin Luther King Library Gallery on June 6.



"FAMILY Ties"

Life Needs a Protected Zone.



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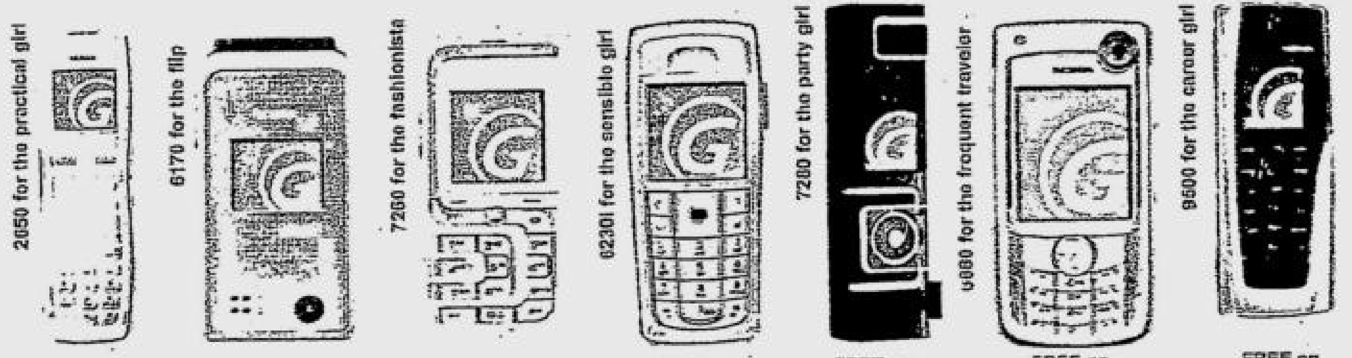
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LIFESTYLE

FEU façade

Is 'culture' a bad word?

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

IS CULTURE relevant to everyday life? Not at all, if you ask the Filipino majority.

Culture is sometimes perceived as staged events like the annual summer beauty pageants held in town plazas. Another giveaway is the packaged "cultural event" of watered-down Philippine songs and folk dances presented mainly to tourists in some restaurants along with dinner.

Culture is imprisoned in museums, seen by many as ivory towers where paintings, sculpture, pottery, jewelry, weavings and other precious and delicate items expressing Philippine traditions are locked up, away from the reach of the general public. They fail to see that these objects are proof of Filipino excellence over the centuries and a source of pride for our people.

Although the locking up of the irreplaceable objects is simply to protect them for posterity, the misconception has arisen that museums exclude the general public, leading to another question: is culture the domain of the elite?

On the contrary, culture is every Filipino's domain.

Philippine culture is what tells our story, sets us apart from other nations, and gives us our identity. What may be surprising to many is that our culture tells the story of Filipino excellence.

The high level of Filipino achievement is seen in precious cultural artifacts like the intricately crafted pre-Hispanic gold jewelry displayed in Manila's Metropolitan Museum.

Excellence is likewise seen in the magnificent Rice Terraces of the Philippine Cordilleras, a landscape that is an endangered but living expression of the Cordillera culture that is also an engineering feat and an environmental system sustained by tradition.

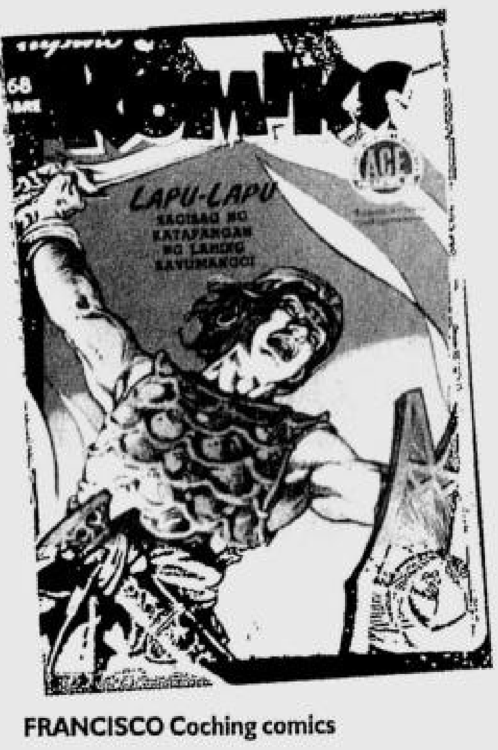
Culture is seen in our classical literature as well as in today's komiks. Also in music going the full range from tribal, *rondallas* and *zarzuela* to Abelardo compositions and today's Pinoy rock.

What may be surprising to many is that the many manifestations of culture tell the story of how everyday Filipino life evolved through the centuries. Art, artifacts, values and practices show how we arrived at the way we live our lives today. Future Filipinos will be looking at how their ancestors lived in 2005 through what materials we leave behind.

Many things tell the story of everyday Filipino life. Clothing worn over the centuries and what is worn today show how style and taste have evolved. Baskets, mats, *sawali* walling and *nipa* roofing, and the wealth of textiles hand-woven all over the country are evidence of Filipino skill and cultural excellence.

Food tells much of the Filipino story: *adobo, pancit* canton, Russian potato salad, paella made of sticky rice and the sweet, orange-colored spaghetti topped with cheese grated straight from the box started as foreign food that Filipinos adapted to suit their palate. Today these recipes are staples of Filipino cuisine and a definite manifestation of our culture.

IS 'CULTURE'/ D2



FRANCISCO Coching comics

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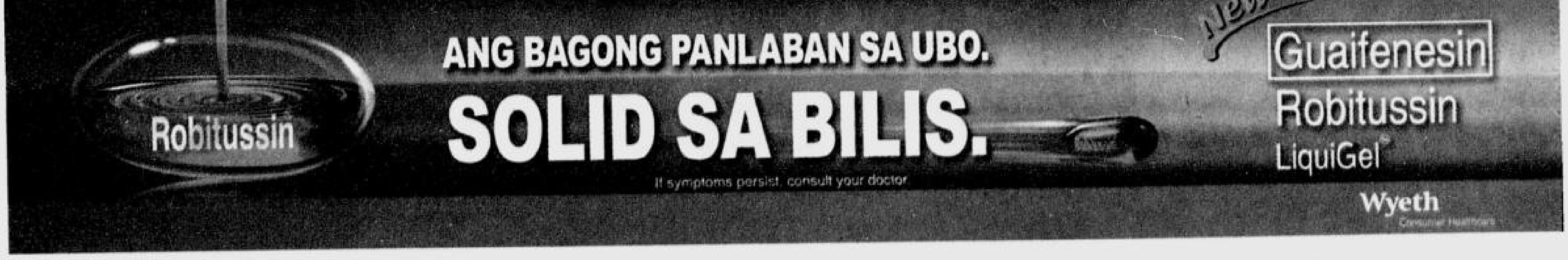

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ATENEO
ART
AWARDS
2005

Ateneo Art Awards on Aug. 3

IN KEEPING with its vision of bringing outstanding art to a wider audience, the Ateneo Art Gallery, the country's leading museum of modern Philippine art, is pleased to announce that the Ateneo Art Awards will be presented at the Power Plant Mall on Aug. 3, with the short-listed and winning artist's works exhibited in the same venue from Aug. 4-7.

Established only last year, the Ateneo Art Awards has been embraced enthusiastically by the local arts and culture community, and is well on its way to being recognized as the country's premier contemporary art prize.

Given to Filipino visual artists under the age of 35, the awards are bestowed on three individuals or collectives who, in the opinion of the jury, and based upon a public solo or group exhibition held between May 1, 2004 to May 1, 2005 have made an outstanding and significant contribution to the definition and development of modern art in the Philippines.

This year's awards are national in scope. In addition to nominations being taken from the jurors, nomination forms were also sent out to close to 100 commercial art galleries across the Philippines, who were invited to submit the names of up to three outstanding artists who showed at their spaces, together with visual documentation of the exhibitions and the artworks presented.

The jury will deliberate on these submissions on June 3, after which a short list of 12 artists will be announced in the national press. A second deliberation will be held on June 15 to determine this year's three best.

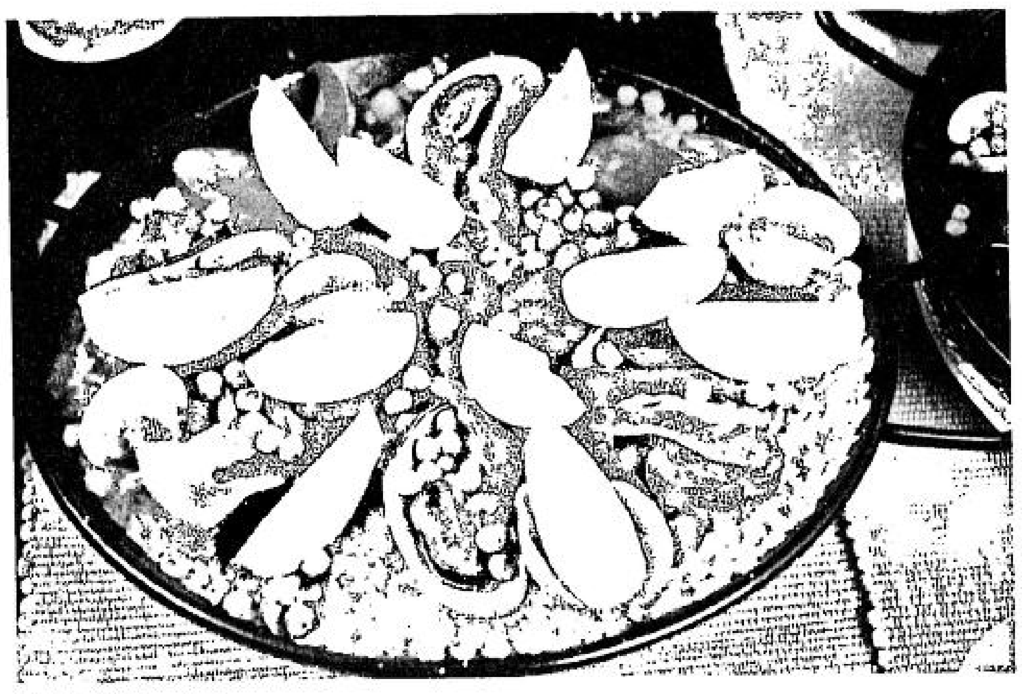
"Cross Encounters" draws its inspiration from an added dimension to the Awards this year—the establishment of the Ateneo Art Gallery's and the Philippines' first Visual Art Studio Residency Program in Sydney, Australia. This program will provide one of the three Ateneo Art Awardees with round-trip airfare, an all-expenses paid apartment in the prestigious Potts Point area of Sydney for three weeks, a work studio in the artistic district of Newtown, an allowance, as well as an invitation to exhibit his or her work at The Cross Art Projects, a leading alternative art space in the city, during the last week of November 2005.

The final selection from among the three winners selected locally shall be made by the Sydney gallery, which will also be announced during the Awards ceremony.

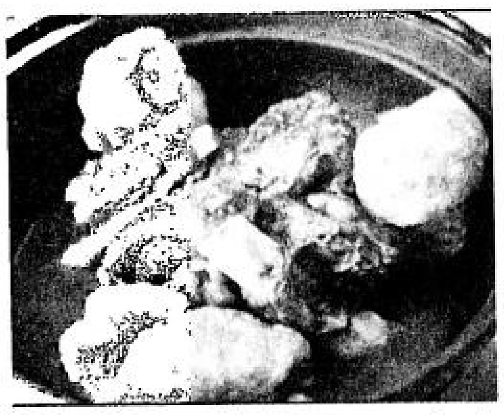
The Ateneo Art Gallery is offering this unparalleled opportunity to the selected artist not only to bring his or her art to an international audience via the East-West confluence that is Sydney, but also to expand the appreciation and understanding of contemporary Philippine art overseas.

Is 'culture' a bad word?

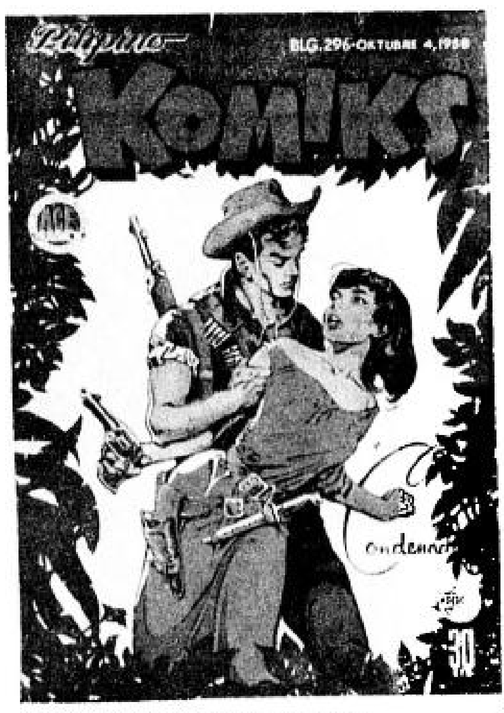
From page D0



PAELLA Valenciana



SPARERIBS ADOBO with annatto seeds and chicharon



A VIRILE well-muscled hero from Coching cover circa 1958

Heritage structures

Architecture is another expression of the Filipino story. Humble and grand houses, government and religious buildings, towns and cities show how Filipinos live and how our buildings and town planning adapted foreign influences to suit our environment and temperament.

When conserving groups of old houses or historic districts in towns and cities, the usual vision regards heritage buildings as monuments from the past that are precious objects to be preserved in museum-like quality. However, we forget that these buildings are living, usable objects.

Preferably buildings should not be preserved as empty shells. To give an old building relevance, it should best continue with the life that it was originally built for, such that old houses are still lived in and churches are still places for worshipping. The next best thing would be recycling the structures into something useful for modern lives like banks, shops, offices, or schools, places that serve the needs of our 21st century lives.

The most successful examples of building preservation are those that use old buildings for modern uses. The Department of Education's Heritage Schoolhouse Restoration Program developed a heightened sense of pride in teachers and students, making them aware of the department's long history and commitment to education.

Gota de Leche, an NGO established in 1907 and still in operation, restored its 1917 building in Manila's congested University Belt. The restoration renewed its sense of mission, attracted assistance from other charitable groups for its programs, and the quality of the restoration work won a 2003 Unesco Asia-Pacific Cultural Heritage Award.

The restoration of the 1930s Far Eastern University's Art Deco campus not only improved the physical facilities of the university, it catalyzed owners of neighboring buildings to initiate a neighborhood renewal program that improved the appearance of their street and elicited support from the City of Manila who provided increased peace and order support and much-needed infrastructure improvement.

These examples show that there is more than psychic value to preservation. Gota de Leche generated additional participation for its programs. The street redevelopment program inspired by FEU improved revenues for merchants on Nicanor Reyes St., demonstrating that there is a financial component to preservation after all.

Most important, those involved in the projects developed pride in their buildings and in the improved image of their neighborhoods. These projects were undertaken simply to improve the everyday quality of life of their direct users and the community impact each has achieved was unplanned.

The FEU project went beyond campus walls, influencing the quality of life of its neighbors. The revitalized neighborhood is slowly attracting visitors curious to see the improvements in the area. Visitors patronize local businesses, adding to earnings of merchants and the community. It may not be farfetched to expect that this phenomenon could be developed into a future tourism service.

How relevant then is culture? Essential for nation building, culture provides the Filipino a sense of identity and asserts his individuality in a globalizing world.

Culture can be an effective catalyst for urban refurbishment and for income generation.

The number of professionals working in the culture field, from professors, researchers, government personnel, museum employees, tourism practitioners, architects, the conservation construction industry and the work of so many more individuals in the field contribute to the national economy.

Culture certainly is relevant. It is for everybody. And "culture" is not a bad word.

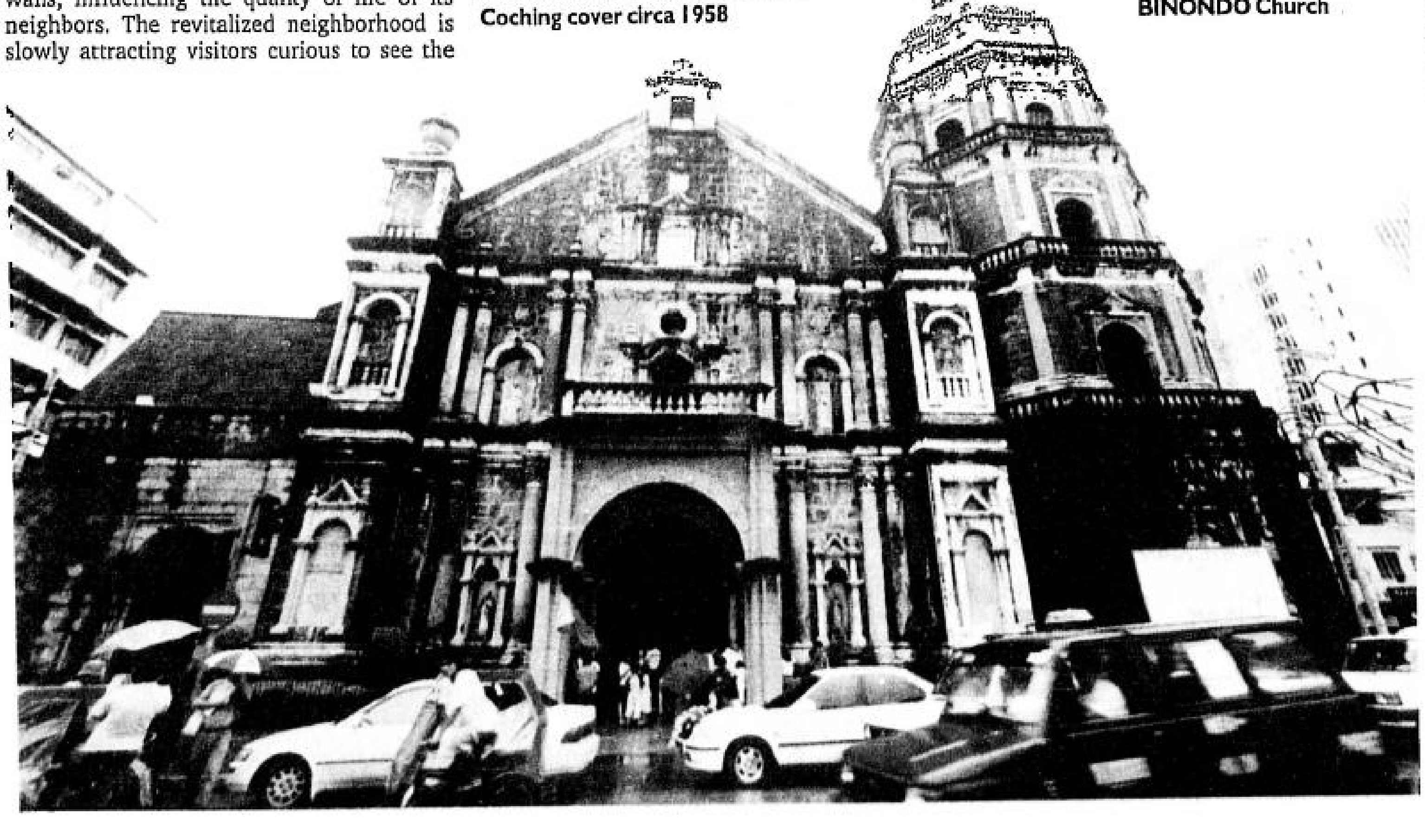
Heritage watch

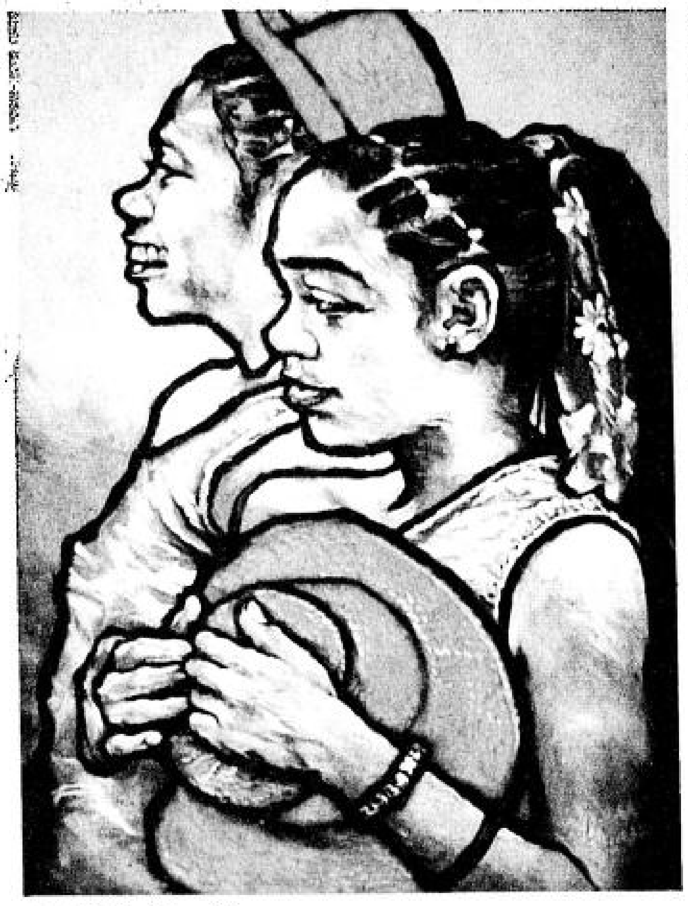
Walk around Manila each Saturday during the month of June with Ivan ManDy who says, "beneath the *barong-barongs* and those sexy billboards, there actually is something worth appreciating in this dear city of ours."

On June 4 or 18, the Big Binondo Food Bowl walk starts at 1 p.m. to take you walking and eating your way through Binondo. On June 2, take the Chinese Cemetery Walk. Meet at the steps of San Sebastian Church at 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 25, for the San Miguel District Walk. Don't just appear, first make a booking and inquire about cost by texting 0917-3291622 or e-mailing oldmanilawalks@gmail.com

E-mail feedback to afvillalon@hotmail.com

BINONDO Church





"2 CUPS of Decaf"

Binangonan artist at Hiraya

THE FILIPINO "pista" season is on at the Hiraya Gallery as it is holding the first solo exhibition of Lakan Ilaw, a Binangonan artist, whose works of oil on canvas capture the mood of excitement progressing among the participants and the spectators of streetdancing—a spectacle of colors, band music and costumes—held in honor of the town's patron saint, St. Ursula.

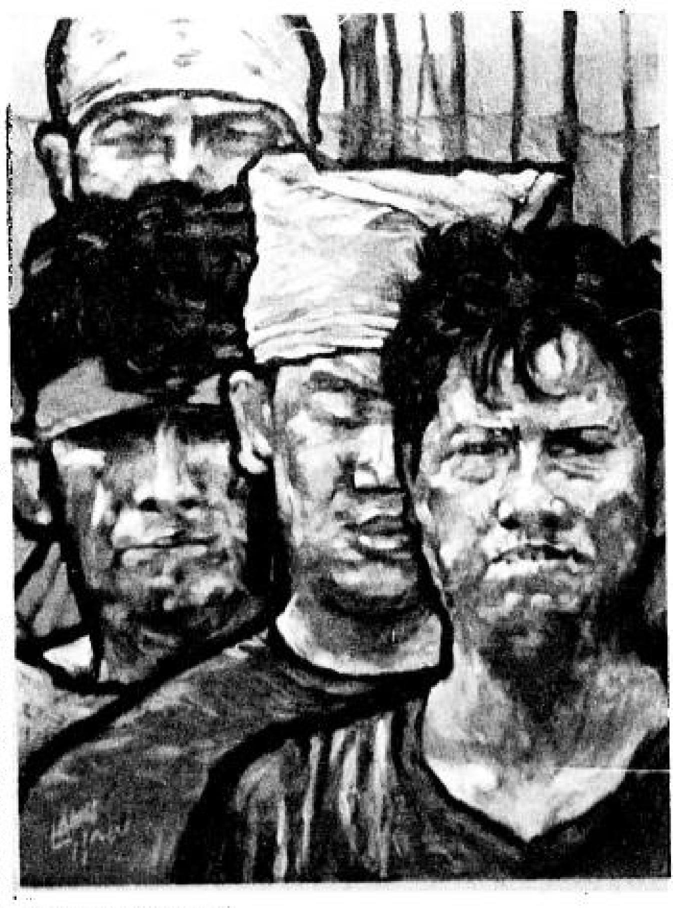
Lakan Ilaw extenuates the gaiety of the festival by painting huge close-ups of faces. Smiles of male revelers, the grim expressions of the pagoda bearers, the jostling bodies of young male devotees. He matches their spirit with the giggles of the young female dancers, the close bound nubile bodies, and the shy flirting gazes darting out from onlookers. Among them his imagination brushed with energy, a turn that makes Hiraya Gallery a sumptuous sight of hedonism.

The festive atmosphere is, however, tamed by the artist's choice for dark tones of earth colors: black, green, terra cotta and violet. They provide him an expression for his gentle sentiments for the people of his hometown. Having been abroad for 10 years in Dubai, United Arab Emirates and Shanghai, China, Lakan Ilaw anchors his longing for his hometown in his first exhibition.

On the same occasion, his colors imply his belief that the traditional expression of piety is earth-bound. Sensuality mixes with spiritual practice. Unorthodox ways become the hymns and the sights of the day. The shouts above the crowd become the scream of piety at noonday. Lakan Ilaw colors somberly all his canvasses of Filipino "debosyon."

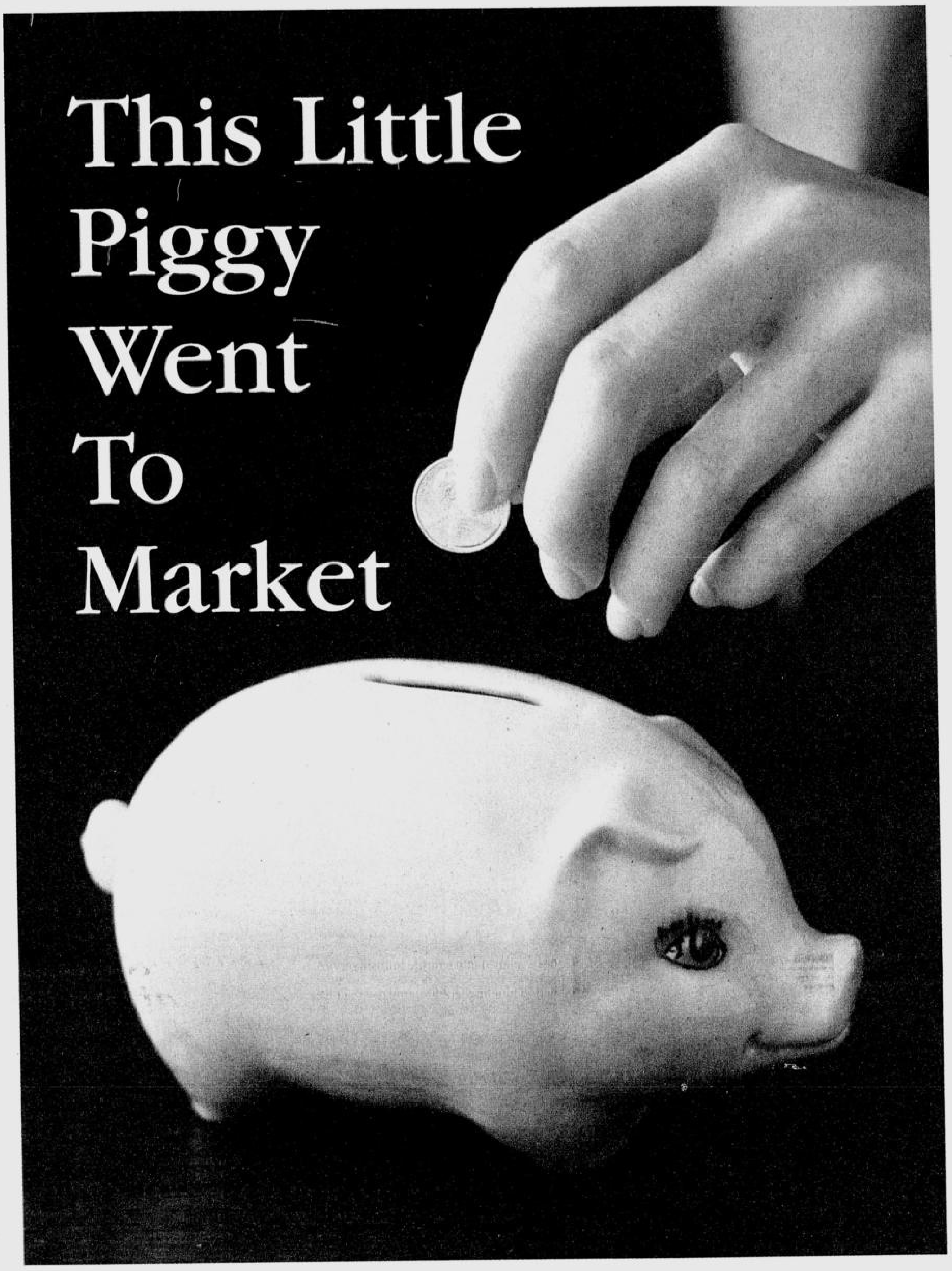
Lakan Ilaw studied Fine Arts at the University of Santo Tomas.

The exhibition runs until June 15. Hiraya Gallery is located at 530 U.N. Avenue, Ermita, Manila. Call 5233331 or e-mail hiraya@info.com.ph or visit www.hiraya.com



"WITH the Lakers"

This Little Piggy Went To Market



PLDT WeRoam changes the Philippines sales and distribution landscape

Walter Ray Choi

Whizzing perilously into oncoming traffic, I try to get past tricycles that insist on plying the national highway north. I'm trying to avoid everything else- people on bicycles, carabao sleds and irrigation pumps hooked up to wheels that travel a stultifying 20 kph. Anything that can barely move is on our highways. And we burn more hours on "infrastructure" that has relatively remained unchanged since the 70's. It's still two lanes all the way to Baguio.

I'm thinking about the business impact. The supply chain grinds to a halt at its weakest link. And for this country, that weak link has always been the infrastructure gap. And let's be honest, this will be the case for some time to come.

We saw that gap close with the miracle of wireless data communications. This was the revolution that bared the fact that information was just not the ultimate asset, it's everything. And with every incremental improvement in the speed and ease of information access, there is an exponential jump in profits.

We're On a New Highway

On a blessed pit stop, I have a chat with a good friend of mine from college. Jay went into the hog business a few years back. "It was just a free-for-all when we tried to locate builders, truckers or buyers for our pigs. We spent more time looking for the best rates and putting our pigs in truck trips that just got longer and longer," he tells me.

"And I can imagine just how vegetable farmers had to deal with their products being the most perishable," he adds. Vegetable production is big in the CAR (Cordillera Administrative Region) where I'm heading. The industry reeling from production to marketing problems has also suffered 40-60% drops in demand since 2002.

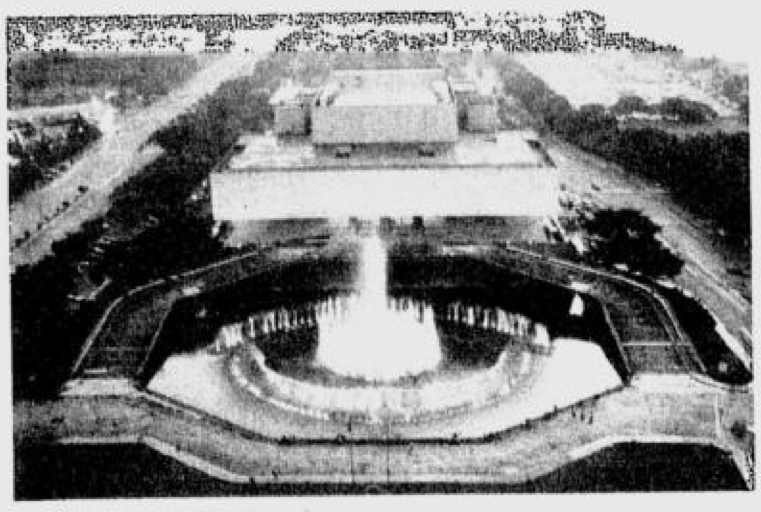
Access To Information and Your Market - Anytime, Anywhere

Jay spots the PLDT WeRoam Aircard in my pack. Like a proud kid with a new toy, I light it up and soon we're on the net. He realizes the implications of this new revolution in wireless internet. "Farmers hate dealing with credit institutions because of delays and red tape," he tells me. "Web-enabled transactions even just for information and contacts would be a great help."

"Just" for information? But I realize the same thing. Mobile telecoms started the information revolution, but now PLDT WeRoam stands at the forefront of adding a new dimension: information and transactions. Any farmer, if he wants to, can now get information from government, banks, and even facilitate his sales just by logging on. It's hardly a stretch of imagination, just common sense. And on this new highway, I think it'll be a safer and much more enjoyable trip.

PLDT WeRoam Discovery Tent

PLDT WeRoam is going closer to market as well. Log on to www.pldtweroam.com while you still use a wired connection. To try PLDT WeRoam yourself, watch out for the PLDT WeRoam Discovery Tent being pitched near you. Don't forget to bring your laptop, and see what it can really do for you.



AERIAL view of CCP Complex

NCCA, CCP hold design competition for new CCP district

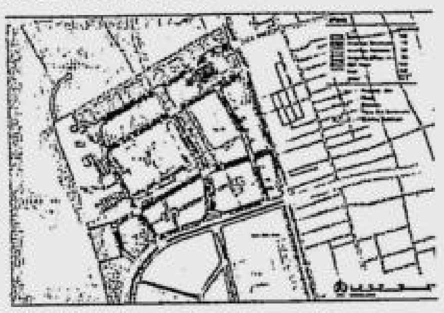
THE NATIONAL Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP) are holding the Design Excellence Competition for the new CCP district as envisioned in the CCP Master Business and Development Plan (MBDP).

The development plan aims to establish the new CCP Complex as a "center for arts and culture in Asia and the centerpiece of artistic expression of the Filipinos' soul and spirit," optimize the economic potential of the district to be self-sustaining, promote public life and private activities as well as encourage private sector participation.

The competition shall cover the design for Cluster I—the Promenade area, and Cluster II—the Art Sanctuary. The designs will include general architectural, landscape architectural and urban design for the two clusters, with emphasis on the new performing arts theater building to be located behind the existing Tanghalang Pambansa Building (CCP Main Building).

The competition is divided into two categories: Professional Architects and Architecture Students. The entries for the professional level shall be in the name of an individual registered architect or a partnership with registered architects. The competitors shall name other consultants in his/her design team—planners, urban designers and landscape architects. Students of architecture shall be a group competition (minimum of two per group) and are required to get the endorsement of their respective deans.

The competition for the Professional category shall be in two stages: a) a short listing of 10 best entries with output that will cover a written concept printed on a one page of A4 plain paper and; b) the 10 best entries shall enhance their work by submitting a minimum of seven AO boards and a scale massing model presenting more detailed development of their concepts.



LAND use plan for new CCP district

Submission of entries is in July for professionals and September for students. A panel made up of the screening committee, three experts in the design fields and three from the NCCA and CCP will do the final judging.

Around P1 million is earmarked for prizes for the winning entries. Winning designs will also be exhibited at the CCP main gallery in December, and featured in a special issue of Bluprint Magazine.

The project is initiated by the Committee on Architecture and Allied Arts of the NCCA and implemented by the Philippine Association of Landscape Architects for the benefit of the Architecture and design sector in the Philippines.

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4. Drop your entries in NIDO 1+ drop boxes in supermarkets and selected BPI outlets.
5. Promo period is from March 15 to June 15, 2005.
6. You can win only once during the promo period. If your name is picked twice, you win the bigger prize.
7. Non-winning entries in the Preliminary Draw are still qualified for the Grand Draw.
8. Deadline of entries for the April 17 Preliminary Draw is on April 3, 2005. Deadline of entries for the July 15 Grand Draw is on June 15, 2005.
9. Winners will have their names published in a national newspaper and will be sent a letter of notification on how to claim their prizes.
10. Prizes not claimed 60 days after receipt of letter of notification will be forfeited in favor of Nestlé Philippines, Inc. upon approval of the DOH-BFAD.
11. Prizes of P5,000 each will be given away via BPI Manager's Checks for encashment in any BPI branch of choice. Prizes of P25,000 and above will be given as BPI Platinum 2-in-1 Savings and Insurance accounts. Account openings are subject to existing policies and procedures of BPI.
12. Winners of cash prizes through a BPI Platinum account may choose to withdraw the prize money as long as they maintain a minimum average daily balance of P25,000 for a 3-month holding period from the time the account is opened.

• As a feature of the BPI Platinum account, winners of cash prizes through this product will be entitled to free accident insurance coverage and free accident medical benefits as long as the minimum average daily balance of P25,000 is maintained.

Prizes for the April 17, 2005 Preliminary Draw			
4th Prize	P 5,000	50 winners	12 Luzon, 12 Visayas, 12 Mindanao, 14 GMA
3rd Prize	P 25,000	7 winners	2 Luzon, 2 Visayas, 2 Mindanao, 1 GMA
2nd Prize	P 50,000	4 winners	1 Luzon, 1 Visayas, 1 Mindanao, 1 GMA
1st Prize	P100,000	2 winners	1 Luzon/GMA, 1 Visayas/Mindanao

TOTAL = P825,000

Prizes for the July 15, 2005 Grand Draw			
5th Prize	P 5,000	50 winners	12 Luzon, 12 Visayas, 12 Mindanao, 14 GMA
4th Prize	P 25,000	8 winners	2 Luzon, 2 Visayas, 2 Mindanao, 2 GMA
3rd Prize	P 50,000	4 winners	1 Luzon, 1 Visayas, 1 Mindanao, 1 GMA
2nd Prize	P 100,000	2 winners	1 Luzon/GMA, 1 Visayas/Mindanao
Grand Prize	P1,000,000	1 winner	Any area

TOTAL = P 1,850,000

GRAND TOTAL = P825,000 + P1,850,000 + P435,000 tax
= P3,110,000

To Claim Prizes:

- Winners must go to any BPI branch and present the following:
  - 2 valid IDs (Company ID, School ID, Passport, Driver's License, SSS ID)
  - Proof of notification
  - Child's birth certificate
- For prizes above P5,000, the winner must open a new account with any BPI branch.
- Prizes not claimed 60 days after receipt of notification will be forfeited in favor of Nestlé Philippines Inc. upon approval of the DOH-BFAD.
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Revenge, Pinoy style

Giovanni Nakpil works for George Lucas' Industrial Light and Magic and helped create the magic of the last chapter of the 'Star Wars' saga

HAYDEN Christensen plays Anakin Skywalker, who is drawn to the dark side of the Force in "Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith."

GIOVANNI Nakpil

By Daniel Abbey
Contributor

I SAW this tall figure dressed in black. I didn't realize it was the dark lord of the Sith himself…"

No, this isn't Obi-Wan Kenobi reporting to the Jedi Council in "Star Wars Episode III: Revenge of the Sith." Rather it is 28-year-old Giovanni Nakpil, a Filipino-Canadian who works for George Lucas' special effects company, Industrial Light and Magic (ILM).

Giovanni, or Gio as his friends call him, is talking about Hayden Christensen, the actor who plays Anakin Skywalker/Darth Vader in the latest "Star Wars." He almost ran him over while backing his car out of Skywalker Ranch one morning. Luckily, he saw the actor in time to dodge him.

"I wonder how he would have reacted if I had hit him?" he muses.

Gio, who grew up in the Philippines and Canada, is one of ILM's hottest 3D computer graphics modelers. The latest "Star Wars" film features much of his digital handiwork. It's a job he's simply ecstatic about.

"Not to sound like some gushing fanboy, but working for Lucas and his company is literally a dream come true!" he enthuses.

Little wonder there. ILM, of course, is best known for its ground-breaking "Star Wars" special effects. The company is also responsible for bringing to life the dinosaurs in "Jurassic Park" as well as pushing the limits of technology in films like "Terminator 2," "Sky Captain" and "Pirates of the Caribbean" (to name a mere few).

It is the film industry's most revered special effects company.

Burger flipper

Gio has come a long way in his career. He started out in McDonald's as a burger flipper, or as he likes to put it, a "sandwich artist." Yet his true skill was as a digital artist. He soon got out of the culinary arts and into the animation business.

It was, however, a pursuit that almost didn't happen.

"I initially wanted a career in creative advertising," he says. "I was in love with the thought of coming up with something creative to sell a product." That idea soon fizzled after he realized that movie special effects were his true passion. "Ever since I was a kid I've always had interest in the world of special effects in moviemaking," he says.

Gio followed his heart and got into CGI (computer-generated imagery). "Back then [CGI] was still in the midst of gaining popularity after the release of groundbreaking movies such as 'The Abyss,' 'Terminator 2' and 'Jurassic Park,'" he explains. Becoming a CG artist was a decision that forever changed his life.

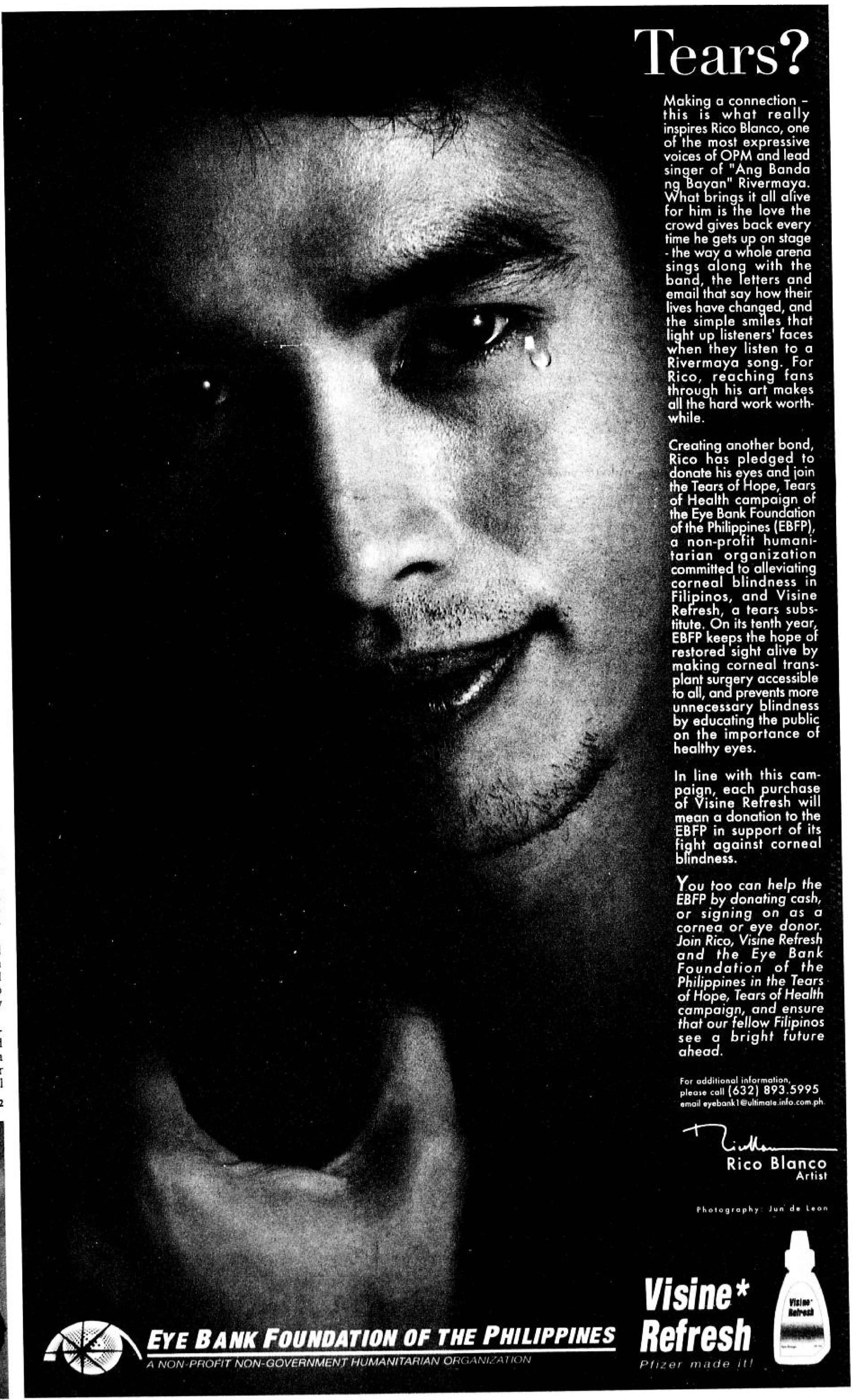
"To this very day I am still thankful I chose the path of CG rather than creative advertising. I do not think I'd be as happy with my career had I chosen the latter."

He gradually made his way up in the world of 3D computer animation and soon enough wound up working in Texas on the fully CGI film "Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius." It was also in Texas that he received an e-mail from a guy claiming to work for ILM.

"This person apparently had seen my website (which is now out of commission) and asked me if I was interested in applying for a position that they were hiring for. I remember thinking that he must have been trying to pull

REVENGE/ E2

IAN MCDIARMID plays Emperor Palpatine in "Star Wars: Episode III."


Tears?

Making a connection – this is what really inspires Rico Blanco, one of the most expressive voices of OPM and lead singer of "Ang Banda ng Bayan" Rivermaya. What brings it all alive for him is the love the crowd gives back every time he gets up on stage - the way a whole arena sings along with the band, the letters and email that say how their lives have changed, and the simple smiles that light up listeners' faces when they listen to a Rivermaya song. For Rico, reaching fans through his art makes all the hard work worthwhile.

Creating another bond, Rico has pledged to donate his eyes and join the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign of the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines (EBFP), a non-profit humanitarian organization committed to alleviating corneal blindness in Filipinos, and Visine Refresh, a tears substitute. On its tenth year, EBFP keeps the hope of restored sight alive by making corneal transplant surgery accessible to all, and prevents more unnecessary blindness by educating the public on the importance of healthy eyes.

In line with this campaign, each purchase of Visine Refresh will mean a donation to the EBFP in support of its fight against corneal blindness.

You too can help the EBFP by donating cash, or signing on as a cornea or eye donor. Join Rico, Visine Refresh and the Eye Bank Foundation of the Philippines in the Tears of Hope, Tears of Health campaign, and ensure that our fellow Filipinos see a bright future ahead.

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Rico Blanco
Artist

Photography: Jun de Leon

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Revenge, Pinoy style

SKYWALKER (Christensen), Obi-Wan Kenobi (Ewan McGregor) and Mace Windu (Samuel L. Jackson)

From page E1

my leg because his e-mail was an AOL account."

Yet Gio couldn't help his curiosity and e-mailed back. "And lo and behold," he recalls, "the next e-mail address he used to reply was indeed his ILM address. Needless to say I suddenly felt a sudden surge of interest from that point on. I sent them a CD containing my portfolio and I was fortunate enough to be hired after that."

Galaxy is his oyster

Gio was soon at work on a number of projects including 2002's "Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones." He was thrilled, having been weaned on "Star Wars" when he was young and growing up with the films as his main source of inspiration.

Eventually he got the call to work on "Revenge of the Sith," the third and final chapter. Gio was on the project like fire lapping up an oil spill.

"I was fortunate enough to be able to work on a lot of really exciting and fun things in the movie during the four or five months I was on it. It has always been the 'Star Wars' episode that I've wanted to work on ever since I was a little kid, so I would have been ecstatic even if they had me just modeling toenails for all the CG monsters or something."

Luckily, ILM didn't just relegate Gio to toenails. He contributed much to the film including work on the speeder scene, the trees from the Wookie planet Kashyyyk, the Mustafar dwellers (including the "two big dudes on top of the floating platform skimming through the lava"), as well as the clone troopers in Mygeeto (the purple clad ones who look similar to the storm troopers on the ice world of Hoth in "The Empire Strikes Back").

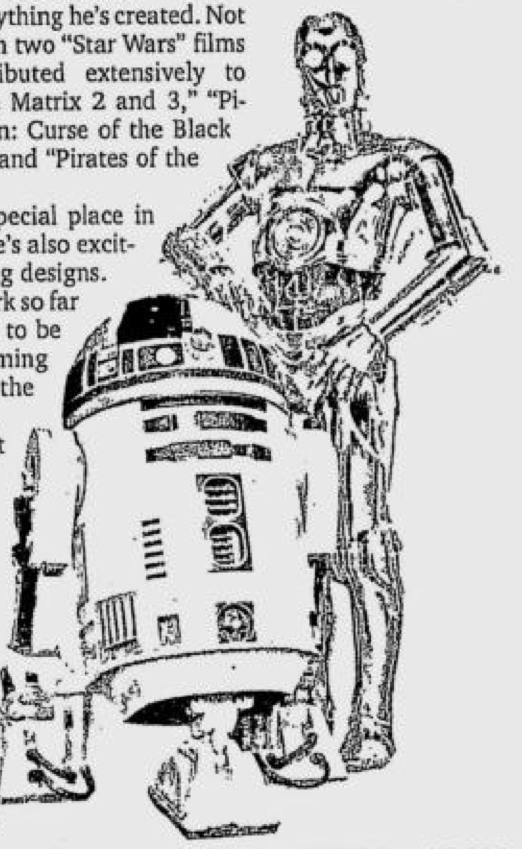
Gio is proud of everything he's created. Not only has he worked on two "Star Wars" films but he's also contributed extensively to "Dreamcatcher," "The Matrix 2 and 3," "Pirates of the Caribbean: Curse of the Black Pearl," "Van Helsing" and "Pirates of the Caribbean 2."

"They all hold a special place in my heart," he says. He's also excited about his upcoming designs. "My most favorite work so far would probably have to be the art in the upcoming movie 'War of the Worlds.'"

You'll have to wait until July 4 to find out what he's talking about. For now you can enjoy his handiwork in "Revenge of the Sith" which is currently in cinemas across the galaxy.

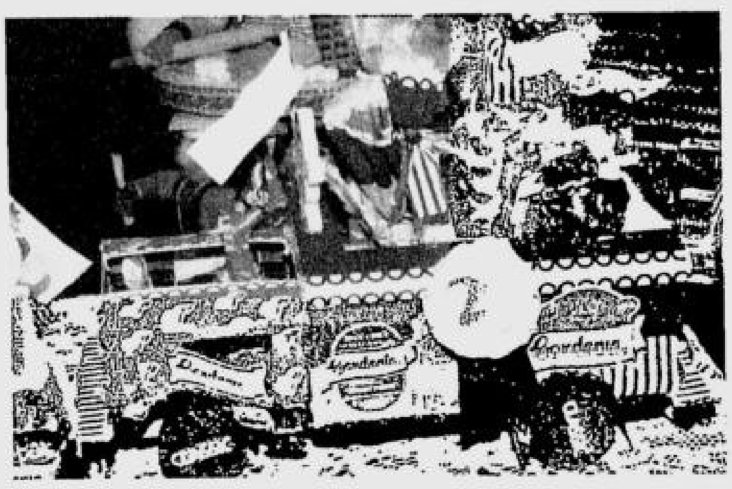
And if the box office is any indication, Giovanni has certainly helped create one heck of a movie.

FIRESHIPS do their best to douse the flames of the Trade Federation ship (left); a band of Wookiee warriors gets ready to take on the Separatist battle droid army (above)



THE FAITHFUL droids R2-D2 and C-3PO have been in all six movies of the Star Wars saga.

Eco-art contest



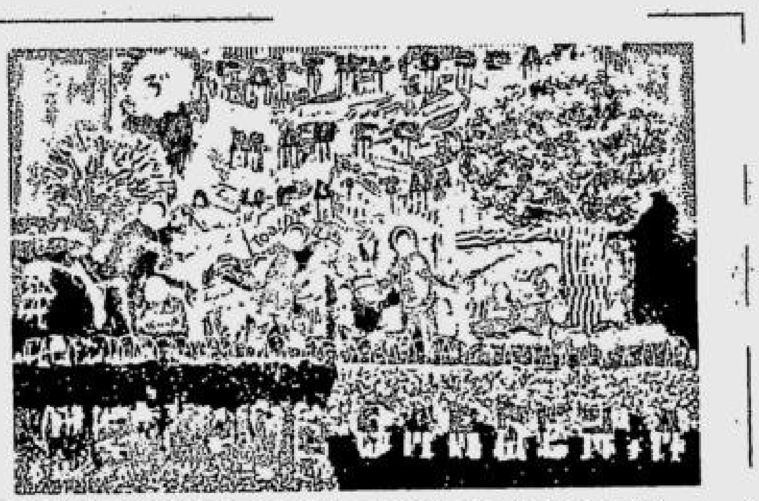
"TRAIN," by P. Zamora Elementary School wins second place (above); "Healthy Boy," by Cruz na Ligas Elementary School wins first place (left).

GARDENIA in partnership with the Department of Education organized Eco-Art with the theme "Healthy Bread Makes a Healthy You."

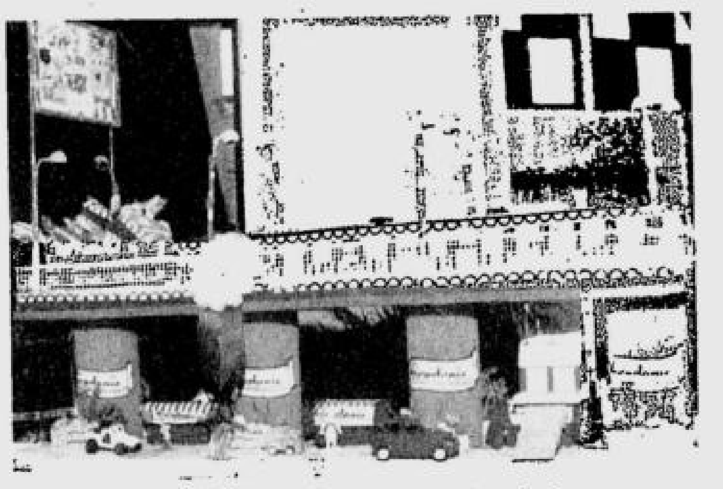
As one of the components of the advocacy campaign of Gardenia's healthy breads, the Eco-Art contest yielded good reviews from the academe, as different elementary schools competed in creating original artworks out of Gardenia wrappers.

The judges praised the brilliant concepts, ranging from realistic to fictitious representations, and the symmetry of colors and dimensions.

"REYNA Elena," by Tenement Elem School places fifth.



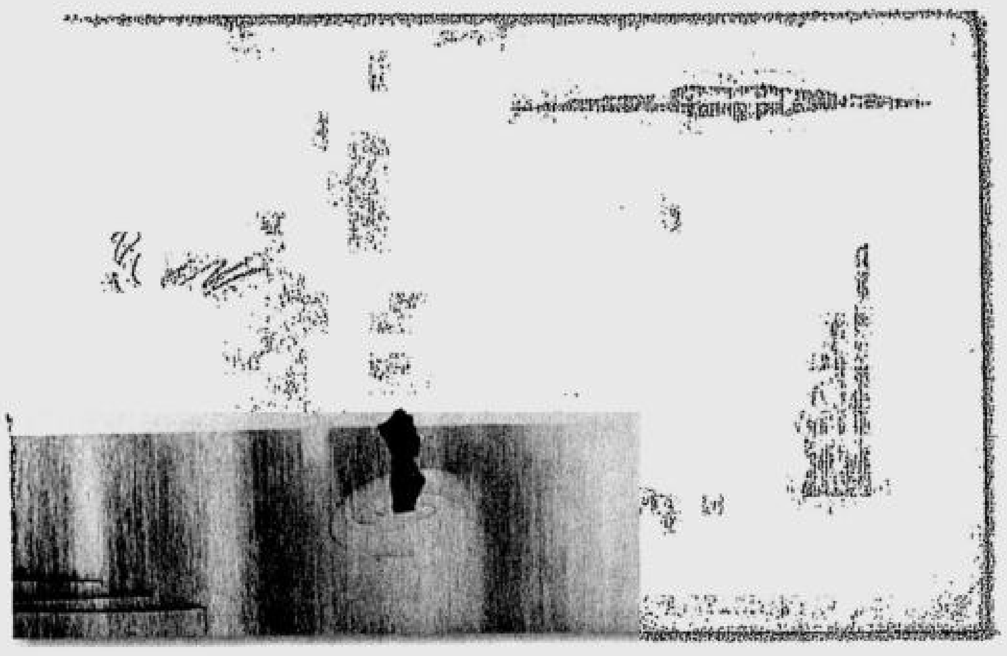
"RECREATIONAL Park," by San Antonio Elementary School gets third place.



"MRT," by Jose Rizal Elementary School is fourth place.

DUNKIN' DONUTS

HUSBAND-and-wife artists Rico and Chachu Lascano offer visual and word reflections of life as viewed from a pond.



"PONDERING" 4

A frog, a green throne
A castle of lily pads
Anyone dare kiss?

Still ponds run deep

By Adele Estrada
Contributor

An owl sits at peace
on a stark withering branch
The moon starts to dance

SEPARATE modern art from its pseudo-highbrow milieu and what do you get? An invented space relieved of reality's forms and judgments, allowing mind and senses unrestricted play. Like kids playing pretend or mimes doing improvisations.

Artist throws a piece of the picture, viewer layers it with her own. However personal the artist's intent, the hung abstract invites a shared romp.

That is what to expect from Rico and Chachu Lascano's word and visual reflections of life as viewed from a pond in an art exhibit titled "PONDering Series." The collaboration of husband and wife, the painter and the poet, is a gazing pool of abstraction.

Rico's canvasses float with a spareness of composition and color, deepened more by what is withheld than revealed. His brush captures the essence of the elements: their changing dynamics, their unchanging tranquility.

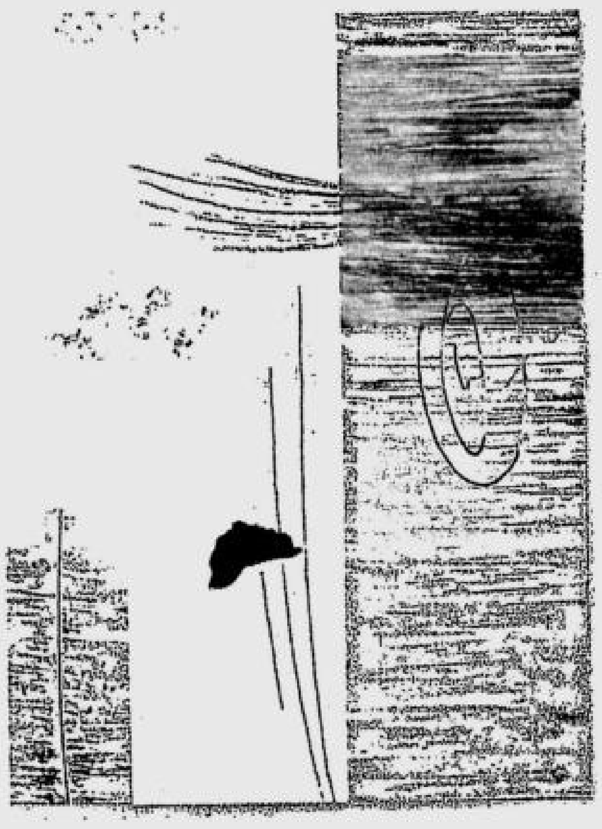
Chachu's haiku poetry chimes in, like a breath parting mist, with gleanins of cicid life and drama within:

The cool mist descends
Embracing the proud old stone
Like a youthful bride.

And even without the winking nudge in the title, the evocation of watery metaphos is clear. The concerted movement in stillness; the persistent peace of broken surfaces; the unity in nature's most random arrangements.

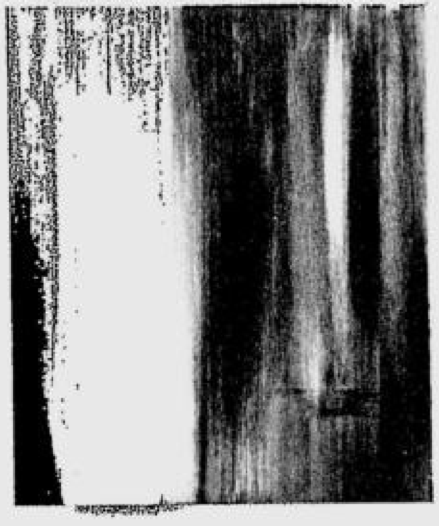
But mostly, the Lascanos' "PONDerings" immerse one in various depths—visual, spatial, occasionally emotional. And surprisingly, your own.

The "PONDering Series" is on exhibit June 10-24 at Galeria Astra 2/L LRI Business Plaza, Reposo St., Bel-Air II, Makati City. Call 8903988.

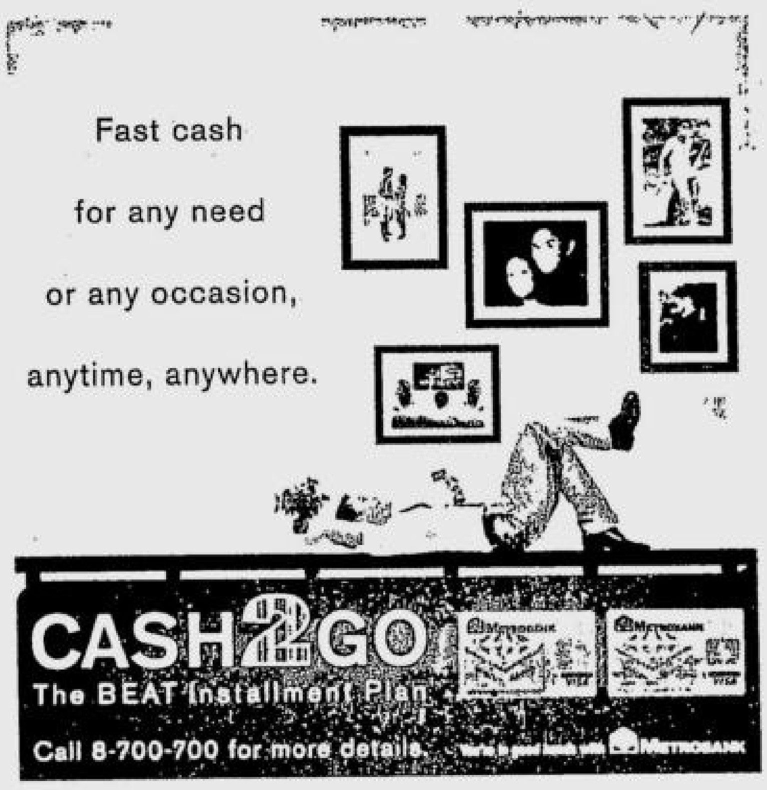


"PONDERING" 14

y pebble
thrown in a daunting green pool
makes its' ripple felt..



"PONDERING" 6



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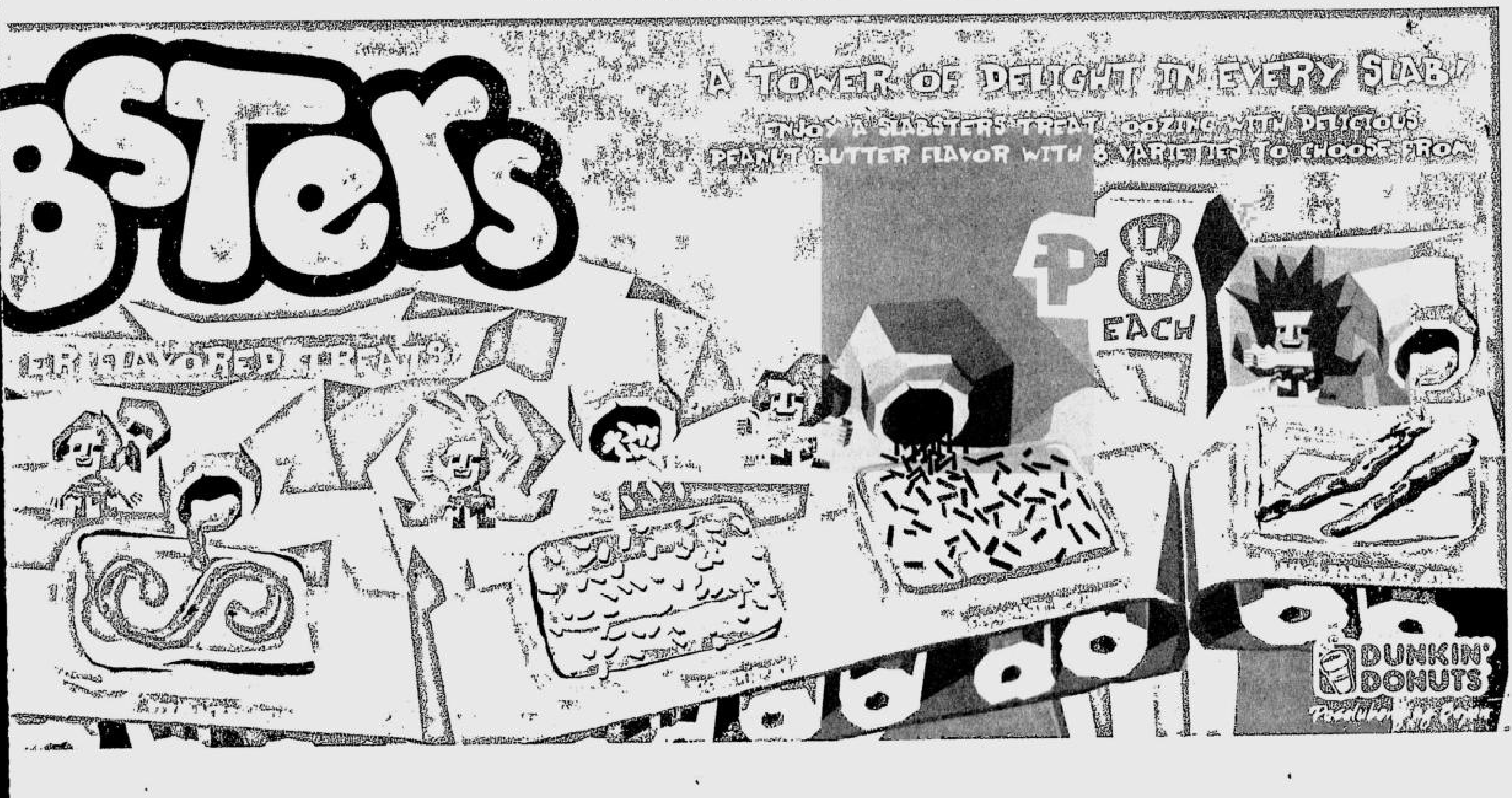

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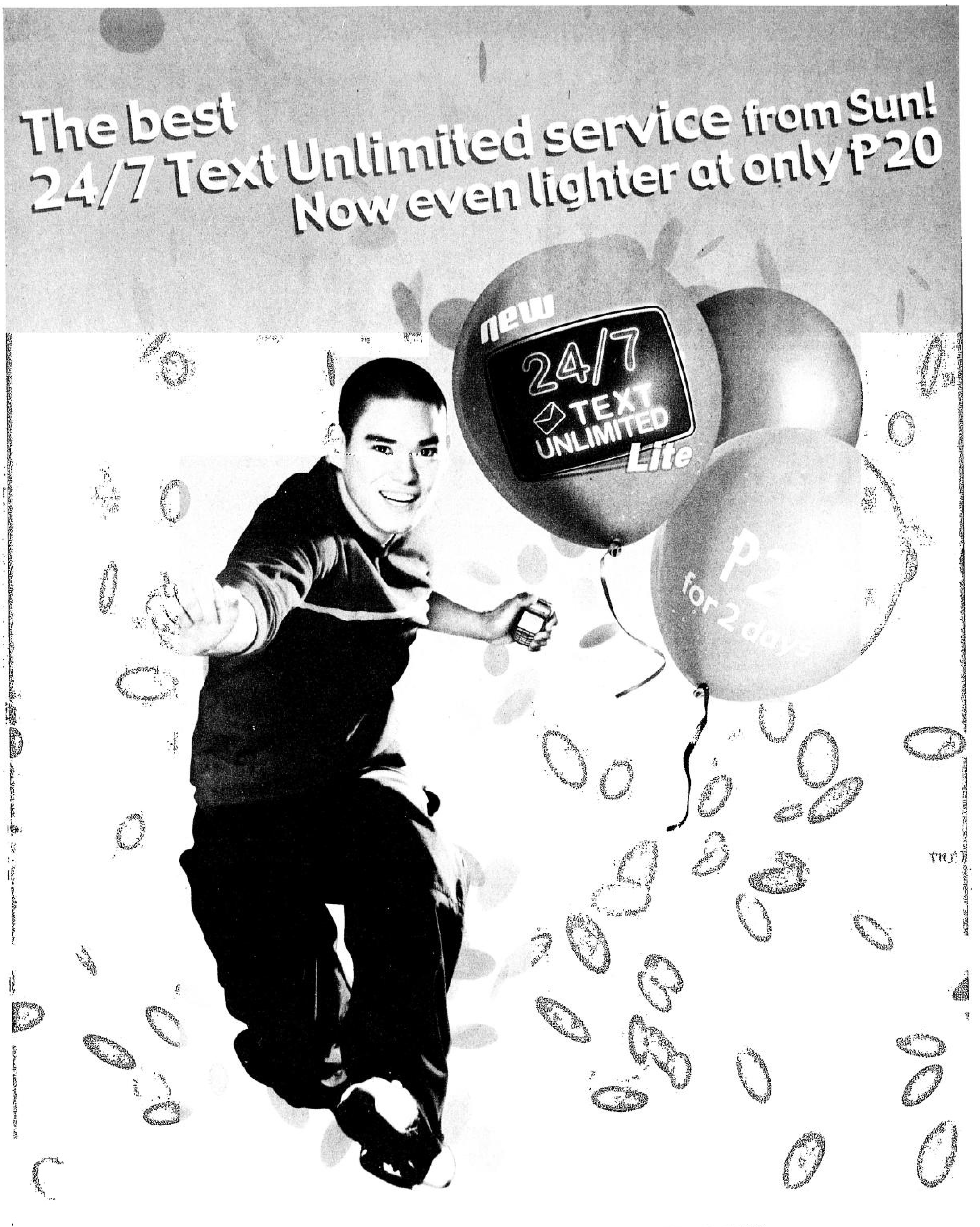
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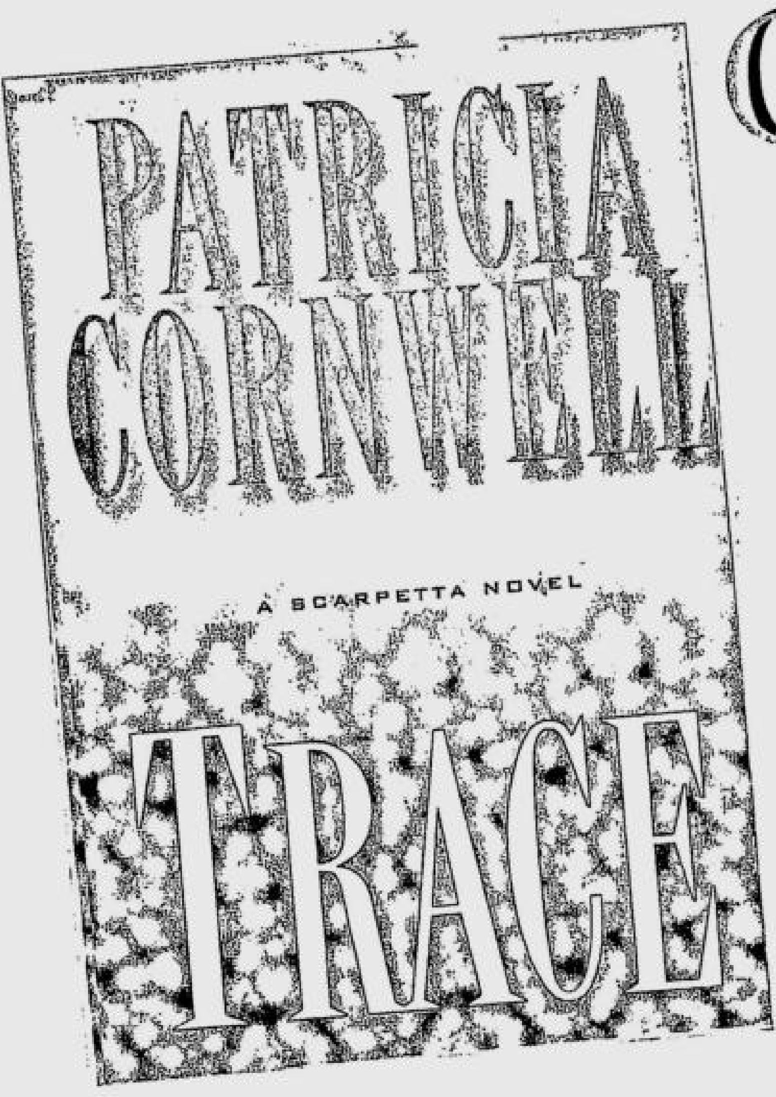
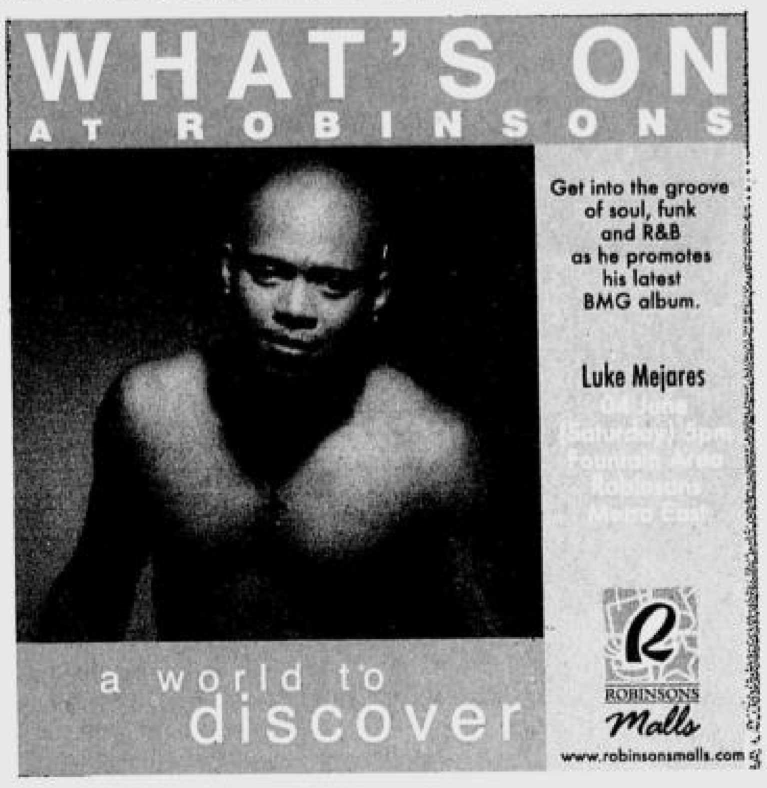


Cornwell's bloody achievement

STORY ON PAGE/ F2

There may be a lot of forensic pathologists around, but Patricia Cornwell's Kay Scarpetta shows in 'Trace' that she still knows how to dissect a corpse and keep you reading, even if you've seen it before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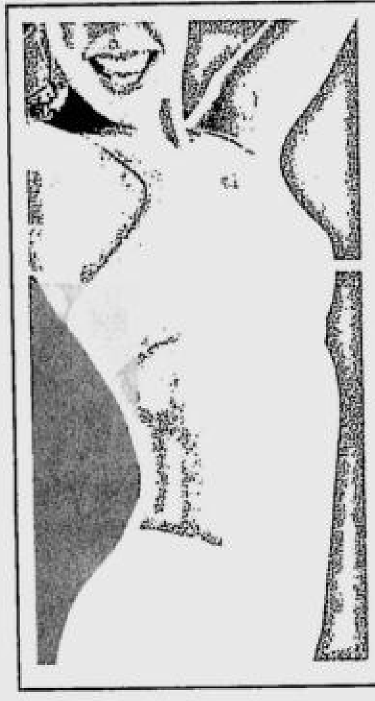
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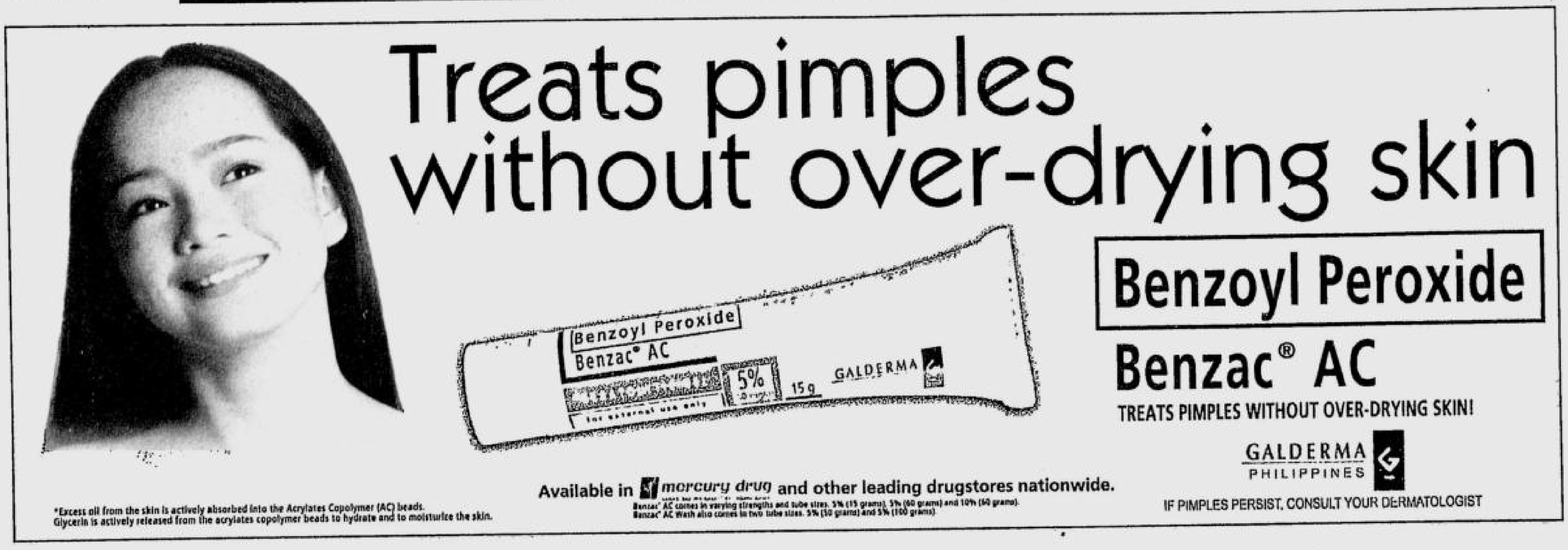
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'Trace' is Cornwell doing what she does bloody well

"Trace"
By Patricia Cornwell
G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York
2004, 435 pages

By Ruel S. De Vera

IT SEEMS inconceivable but there was a time when detailed autopsy descriptions, DNA analysis and psychotic stalkers were squarely the territory of murder-mystery novelists. Long before Anthony Zuiker's Gil Grissom was chasing down shadowy murderers in "C.S.I.: Crime Scene Investigation," author Patricia Cornwell was enthralling audiences with her graphic chronicles of bizarre unsolved cases. Cornwell has also kept her audiences loyal by employing a smart, gritty recurring character, the forensic expert Kay Scarpetta.

Much like kindred character Dr. Alex Cross (the protagonist from fellow novelist James Patterson), Cornwell's Scarpetta is handy with both scalpel and sleuthing the old-fashioned away. With the proliferation of forensic shows on TV and of Solomonic forensic psychologists, Scarpetta could easily have become a relic of a simpler, less DNA-demanding time, when people still fainted in the morgue. Indeed, Quincy is no longer just in the house.

A forensic pathologist and a lawyer to boot, the no-nonsense Scarpetta returns in "Trace," Cornwell's 13th Scarpetta novel (not counting the Scarpetta cookbooks, of course), but for good measure, Cornwell has effectively turned the dissecting tables of her heroine. Long comfortable in her digs and surrounded by trusted lieutenants, Scarpetta makes her belated homecoming to Richmond, Virginia after having been replaced as chief medical examiner. Her old lab literally lies in ruins, her protégé burnt out. And that's not even the most chilling thing about the trip.

More mature

In many ways, "Trace" is Cornwell's opportunity to set a new, more mature and perhaps less fantastical stage for Scarpetta—now she has issues and has to deal with them: "she thinks, only fleetingly, of how her view of rules has changed as light changes with the weather and the season, and things that looked one way in the past look another way now and will look different in days and years to come."

Despite her misgivings, Scarpetta goes back after the new examiner asks for her help in the mysterious death of a 14-year-old girl. Though the girl had been bedridden with the flu, disturbing findings may indicate a much more gruesome death. Together with tough cop Pete Marino, Scarpetta unravels a hidden pattern of secrets and scheming.

Meanwhile, Scarpetta's wealthy niece Lucy Farinelli has moved to Florida, from where she operates her international security firm The Last Precinct. But when a colleague is nearly killed at Farinelli's expensive townhouse, Farinelli must herself figure out exactly what is going on, not just with the mysterious attacker, but with the victim as well.

Inevitably, "Trace" gives the readers deadly crumbs to follow, and those crumbs lead to a single place. There is a frightening convergence in the leads Scarpetta and Farinelli are chasing down, a psychotic stalker who is starting to become more violent and whose menace hits close to home. To unmask the assailant, Scarpetta must face her own issues about Richmond and Farinelli must come to terms with a few difficult elements as well.

Gritty

Cornwell shrouds "Trace" with a gritty coat of soot, making everything just that little bit darker. Scarpetta isn't infallible and all of the sudden the competency of her own people is called into question and their lives put at risk. The plot twists behind "Trace" aren't all that new and, as the novel marches to its end, becomes to become just a little bit predictable. Though some of the menace is later mitigated by the fact that readers have seen so many psychologists and psychopaths they're basically inoculated from true surprise and horror, Cornwell throws a few rather effective red herrings in the way and injects the proceedings with more authenticity, as least as must as one can considering that Cornwell's protagonists are almost perfect despite the twists of cruel fate. There are only so many ways to track down a serial killer.

PATRICIA Cornwell

Still, it is bracing to see how much graphic description Cornwell can muster, and much of "Trace's" more claustrophobic examination scenes are shockingly horrific and detailed, it is clear Cornwell can still slice up a corpse like no other author or TV producer. Her narrative may still be familiar but still effective. Now, Cornwell is also trying to do something a little different but still within her area of expertise or as Cornwell writes: "At this moment, it is all about tracking monsters. The hell with rules."

Body bags and their content may be a dime a deadly dozen now with the invasion of forensics experts in fiction and television, but Kay Scarpetta was one of the originals and in "Trace," though the series and the heroine are showing their age a bit, Patricia Cornwell shows that they're both still pretty good at what they do.

Available in hardcover at National Book Store and PowerBooks.

Tales from the Land of Salt

Book reveals Pangasinan's rich cultural heritage

IMPORTANT aspects of the history and folktales of Pangasinan in the book "Tales From the Land of Salt" by Emmanuel S. Sison, reveal a rich cultural background that sets its position as one of the country's premier provinces.

A collection of some 16 narratives, the book contains historical accounts on the Sri Visayan Amazon Princess Urduja, the Chinese freedom fighter Limahong, the rebellion against Spanish rule by Andres Malong who initiated the idea of Amputi Layag (cutting off the ears of Spaniards), and the exploits of the superhero Palaris.

An interesting feature of Sison's book are the little-known stories about the Lingayen, Pangasinan roots of Jose Rizal and Leonor Rivera.

The stories reveal that apart from Rizal's martyrdom, he and Leonor were protagonists in tragic circumstances that could compare with celebrated romances in world history and literature.

Pangasinan legends such as the "Talo-Talo," the giant bell that sank off the San Juan River in San Carlos, formerly called Binalatongan, the Sigsilew or the local counterpart of the western phenomenon of St. Elmo's fire and others—they reflect the rich historic and literary background of Pangasinan.

The book's subject and the historical fiction approach used to write the stories mirror the temperament and psyche of the Pangasinan people.

Written in short story form, the "Tales From the Land of Salt" is not only a good read but also adds to the rich subject or topic possibilities of Philippine writers.

Sison was a professor at the graduate schools of De La Salle University and the University of the East. He graduated magna cum laude at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters, University of Santo Tomas, and was a university fellow at the University of Illinois while working for his master's degree which he obtained in 1968.

"Tales from the Land of Salt" is available at all Booksale outlets.

New book of gay poems

THE GAY Men's Support Group (GMSG) of the Order of St. Aelred recently launched "Galing Cine Café," a collection of gay poetry in Filipino by Nestor de Guzman.

In this slim yellow volume, Nestor de Guzman ruthlessly maps out the complicated terrain of gay love and desire. Each poem tells a story in very accessible language—the physical and emotional geography thoroughly Filipino.

His characters are encountered in such locales as old movie houses, blue cafés and desolated parks, and because readers will be privy to the subtle drama that his poetry uncovers there, these locations become spaces for displacement, desensitization.

Also interesting is the visual portrayal of male beauty in this book. It uses otherwise "common" men as "models" (there are photos of balding, pot-bellied men who would put Dyesebel to shame).

A copyeditor of the University of the Philippines Press, the author earned his degree in English Studies (Imaginative Writing) from UP Diliman, where he also took graduate courses in Filipino language. He is a member of Katorse, a writers' group from the 14th batch of Ricky Lee's scriptwriting workshop for film and television. "Galing Cine Café" is his first book.

Published by Lambana Press, the book is available at all branches of National Book Store and PowerBooks at P130 per copy.

THE DA VINCI CODE
MAY 2006

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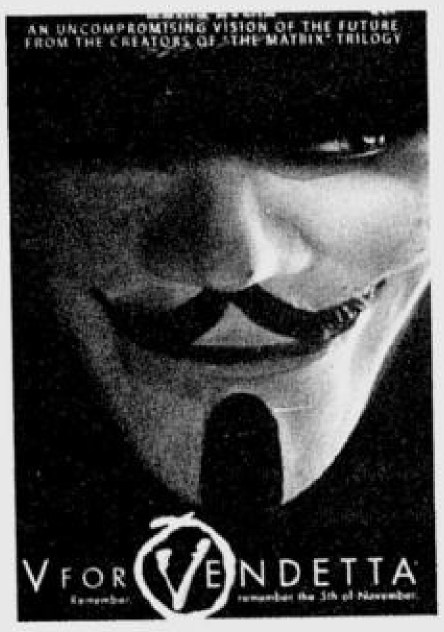
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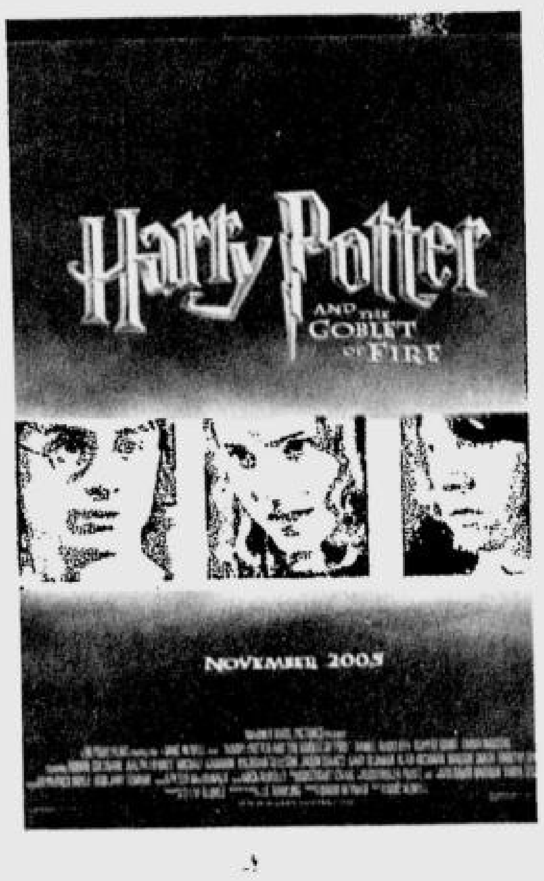

Harry Potter AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE
NOVEMBER 2005

WHICH is better, the movie or the book? For many, the answer is easy.

"If I love a book that I read before I see the movie, more often than not, I hate the movie," says Vanessa Tamayo, development assistant at a Los Angeles-based production company currently adapting several books for film.

"After watching it, I will obsessively dissect what was different and curse the producers, directors or writers for their careless butchering of the literary masterpiece."

But a lot of good movies come from books. And Tamayo thinks it's worth the chance. "Care and time must be taken with such things. You have to find producers and writers that respect the material, but are not so reverential toward it that they are afraid to take steps to change the story to make it work on screen."

Many producers have taken that care. The halls of movie history are filled with legends that started as books—"Gone With the Wind," "The French Connection," "The Godfather," "The Silence of the Lambs," "Forrest Gump" and "The Lord of The Rings" series, to name a few.

At least 12 movies based on books head into movie theaters for the remainder of 2005 and early 2006, aiming to duplicate the feat achieved by "The Bridges of Madison County" or "Sideways." Whether it's a favorite book or an acclaimed bestseller, it's fun to see how the work will move from page to screen. They are:

"The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy." Twenty-six years in the making, the film brings the book that became beloved by millions—and a part of the world's pop cultural zeitgeist—at long last to the movie screen. Mix-mastering science fiction, comedy, adventure and philosophy into one original entertainment experience, acclaimed author and Renaissance man Douglas Adams' novel was always considered ahead of its time.

"Charlie and the Chocolate Factory." Acclaimed director Tim Burton brings his vividly imaginative style to the beloved Roald Dahl classic about eccentric chocolatier Willy Wonka (Johnny Depp) and Charlie, a good-hearted boy from a poor family who lives in the shadow of Wonka's extraordinary factory.

"THE CHRONICLES of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe"

"The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants." As four best friends spend their first summer apart from one another, they share a magical pair of jeans. To keep in touch they pass these pants to each other as well as the adventures they are going through while apart. Based on the young adult book by Ann Brashares.

"Must Love Dogs." This romantic-comedy centers on a divorcee (Diane Lane) who, after choosing another Mr. Wrong, swears off dating. But all hell breaks loose when her close-knit Irish-American family enrolls her in a number of online dating programs. Based on Claire Cook's 2002 novel.

"Syriana." An adaptation of the Robert Baer memoir "See No Evil: The True Story of a Foot Soldier in the CIA's War on Terrorism." George Clooney plays Baer, who spent 20 years in the trenches for the CIA.

"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire." The pivotal fourth novel in J.K. Rowling's projected seven-part tale of Harry Potter's training as a wizard and his coming of age.

"V For Vendetta." Based on the graphic novel written by Alan Moore and illustrated by David Lloyd. Set in the futuristic landscape of totalitarian Britain, the Joel Silver-Wachowski Brothers-production stars Natalie Portman as a young woman who becomes the unlikely ally of a mysterious revolutionary.

"Oliver Twist." Following their Academy-Award winning film, "The Pianist," director Roman Polanski and writer Ronald Harwood reimagine Charles Dickens' classic story of a young orphan boy who gets involved with a gang of pickpockets in 19th-century London.

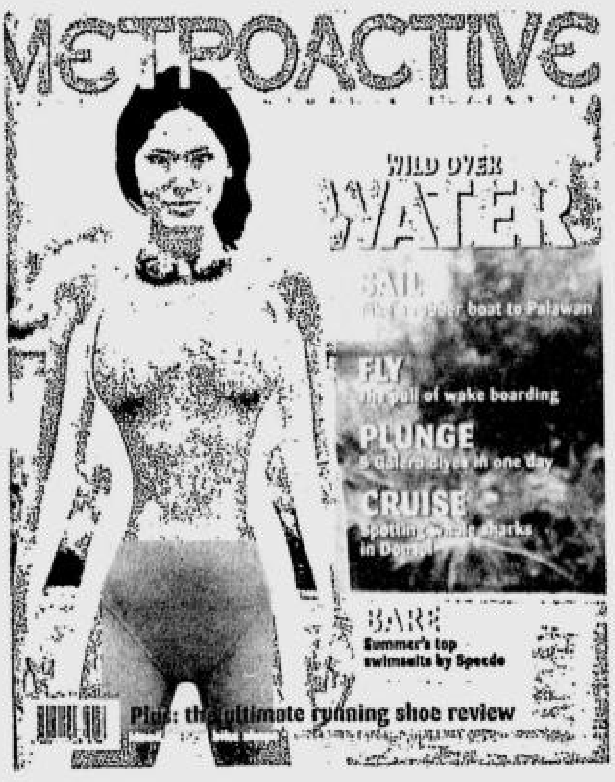
"The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe." A spectacular live-action/CGI motion picture adaptation of C.S. Lewis' beloved literary classic. Lewis' timeless adventure follows the exploits of four siblings—Lucy, Edmund, Susan and Peter—in World War II England who enter the world of Narnia through a magical wardrobe while playing a game of "hide-and-seek" in the rural country home of an elderly professor.

"Memoirs of a Geisha." Based on the international bestseller by Arthur Golden, this tells the inspiring tale of Nitta Sayuri (Zhang Ziyi) who is sold to a geisha house at the age of 9, the training she goes through to become a geisha, and the life she leads as one.

"Zathura." Two young brothers are drawn into an intergalactic adventure when their house is magically hurtled through space. Based on the book by children's author Chris Van Allsburg.

"The Da Vinci Code." The film version of the sensational bestseller by Dan Brown. While in Paris on business, Harvard symbologist Robert Langdon (Tom Hanks) receives an urgent late-night phone call: The elderly curator of the Louvre has been murdered inside the museum. Near the body, police have found a baffling cipher. While working to solve the enigmatic riddle, Langdon is stunned to discover it leads to a trail of clues hidden in the works of Da Vinci—clues visible for all to see—yet ingeniously disguised by the painter.

FITNESS icon Jackie Lou Blanco does a cooking demo for Food Magazine's celebrity cook-off.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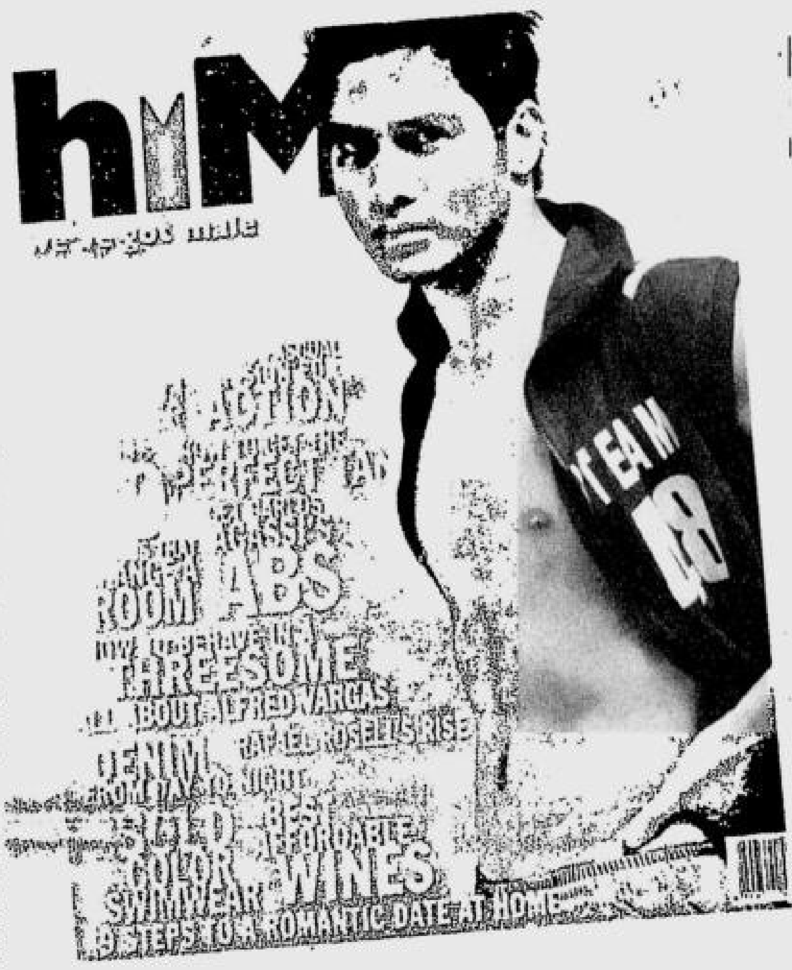
More fashion pages in latest issue of hiM



TO ADDRESS the needs of the growing metrosexual market, the May-July issue of hiM, the men's fashion magazine of ABS-CBN Publishing Inc., has doubled its fashion coverage featuring the most casual sportswear to proper and more formal suits, as well as cufflinks and jewelry.

"We are known by what we wear, as also by the company we keep or lay claim to, and we can negotiate our identity through clothes," writes editor in chief B. Carlo Tadiar in his editor's note. "They mark not just social class but also level of sophistication, worldliness, as also personality, even disposition and more."

The latest issue of hiM features 40 pages of the most stylish menswear in the market, not counting other stories on accessories and grooming.

Actor Carlos Agassi also shares his abs routine in the health and fitness section, which includes an article on how much protein men really need.

The magazine also makes over JR Isaac's bachelor pad for a romantic dinner date at home and offers design suggestions to brighten up a room.

The latest issue features Piolo Pascual on the cover after his feat of being chosen as the first Asian image model of Diadora, the Italian sports line. Veteran entertainment writer Iskho Lopez profiles the award-winning actor and discovers Pascual's remarkable work ethic and no-nonsense attitude about ensuring a long-lasting show-biz career.

Finally, hiM tackles the serious topic of male depression as writer Gina Abuyuan-Llanes tackles why the inability of some men to cope with stress can lead to disastrous, and sometimes tragic, results.

MetroActive

MetroActive, the adventure travel magazine of ABS-CBN Publishing Corp., focuses on the country's top sea and sand destinations in its latest issue now available in newsstands.

For underwater enthusiasts, the magazine has a story on manta ray sightings in Ticao Island, as well as writer Kristine Fonacier's diary of her dive trip in the popular Puerto Galera.

FOOD Magazine editor Norma Chikiamco

For those who prefer to stay afloat, read a remarkable story of how six adventurers traveled from Subic to Palawan—and back—on a rubber boat, and another on whale watching in Donsol.

The magazine also has a handy guide to the Calamianes islands in Palawan, and a list of things to do in Siargao if you don't surf.

For true adrenaline junkies, however, the magazine also gives the lowdown on the latest lifestyle sport, wakeboarding, in Calatagan.

Adventure racers will also be interested to read Rovilson Fernandez's meeting with the sport's toughest guys, Ian Adamson and John Howard. Plus a comprehensive review of the latest running shoes available in sports stores.

Celebrity cook-off

Food Magazine, the Philippine's largest selling culinary magazine, treated grocery shoppers to a special post-Mother's Day treat by holding a celebrity cook-off last May 14 at Rustan's Supermarket, Shangri-La Plaza Mall. The cook-off had fitness icon and ideal mother, Jackie Lou Blanco, do a cooking demo on two sumptuous home-cooked dishes: the chicken *asado* and fried potato balls.

Food Magazine treated the audience to an enjoyable food-tasting and gave sample products from Pal Sweet. A Manttra Pressure Cooker from Singer was raffled off in the event.

The dishes prepared during the event, plus many other easy-to-cook recipes, are in the May issue.

Metro hiM, MetroActive and Food Magazine are available in leading news stands nationwide.

'Rice in the Seven Arts' now available

"RICE in the Seven Arts" brings together in one volume the previously unexplored and primordial role of rice in the seven arts: dance, music, theater arts, motion pictures, architecture, visual arts, and literature.

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The golden grain, husked or unhusked, is likewise presented in its various uses in Philippine culture and the arts: from adornment (of abodes and human bodies) to rice wine for special occasions.

Among the contributors are renowned artists and leading cultural icons, F. Sionil Jose, Eddie Romero and Virgilio S. Almario, Corazon S. Alvina, Glecy C. Atienza, Jose S. Buenconsejo, Brenda V. Fajardo, Patrick D. Flores, Florentino H. Hornedo, Fernando C. Josef, Bienvenido L. Lumbrera, Geronimo V. Manahan, Ramon A. Obusan, Ramon P. Santos, Augusto Villalon, and Basilio Esteban S. Villaluz.

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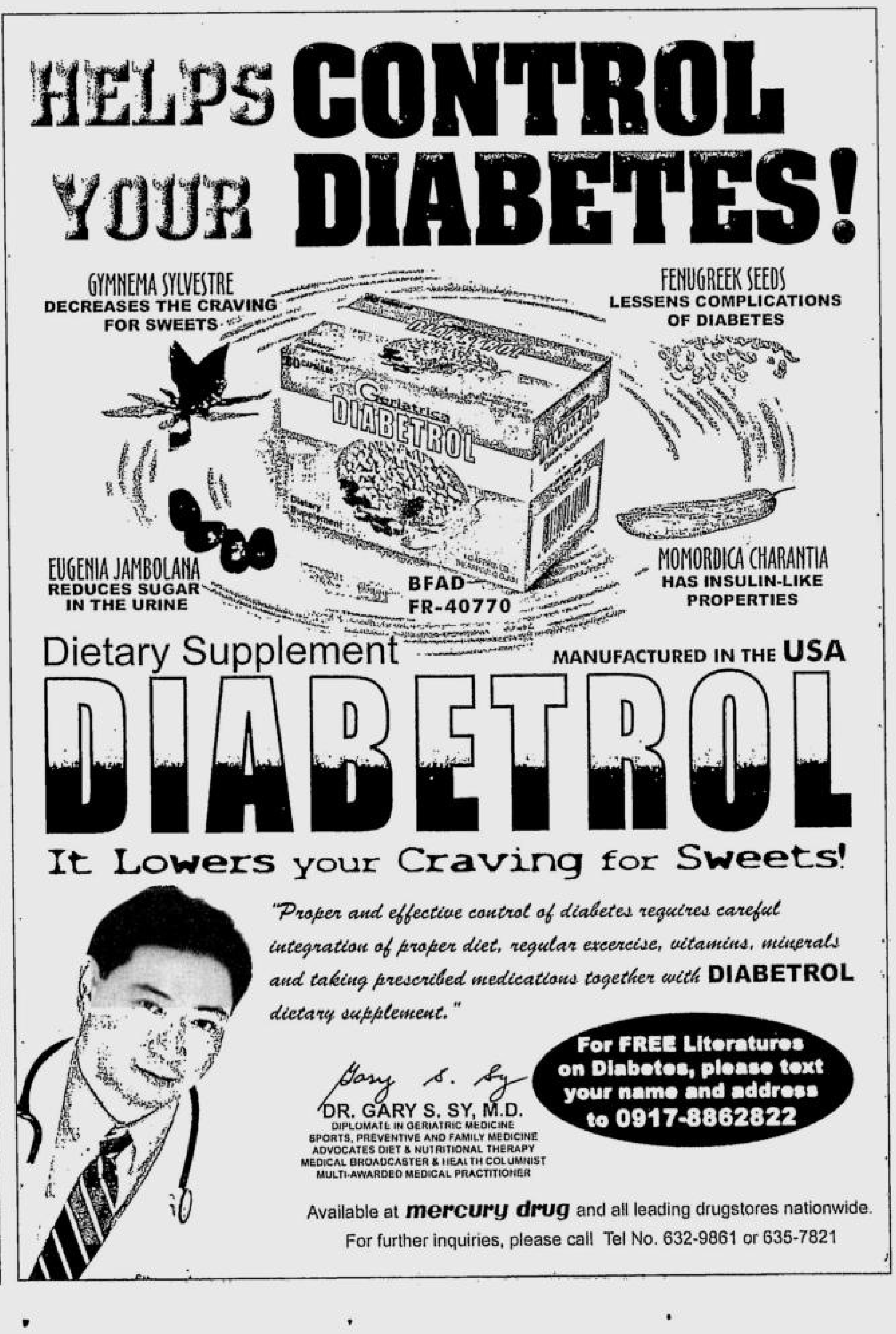

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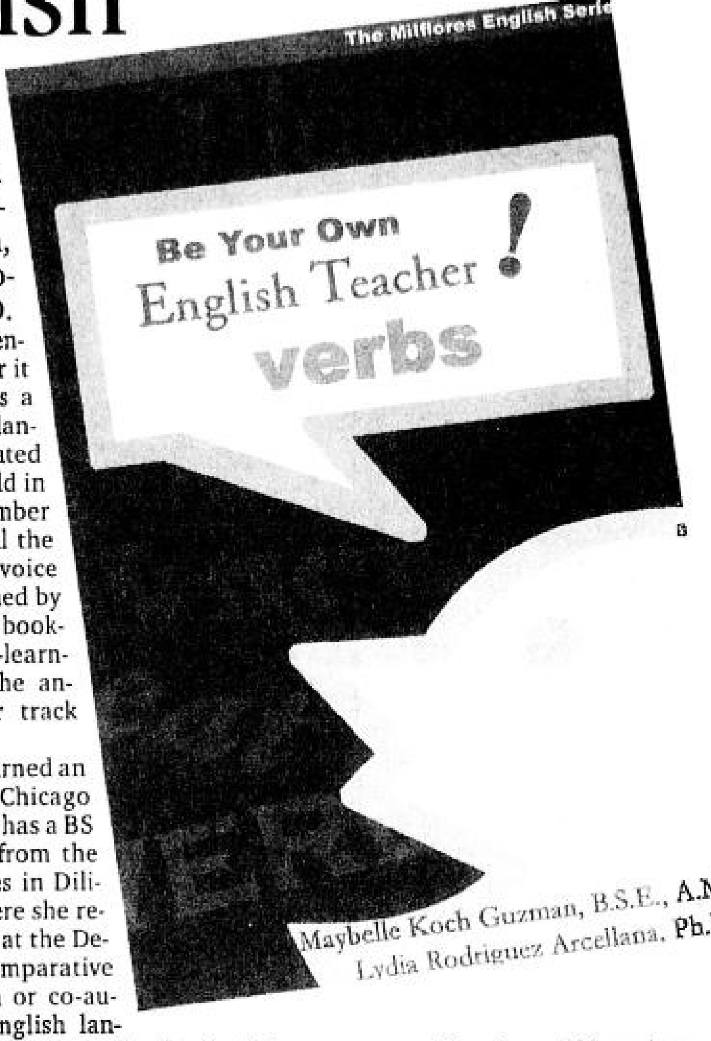
Those pesky verbs in English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Maybelle Koch Guzman earned an AM from the University of Chicago on a Fulbright grant and she has a BS in Education (cum laude) from the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, from where she recently retired as a professor at the Department of English and Comparative Literature. She has written or co-authored 10 books on the English language that are being used from grade school to graduate school.

Lydia Rodriguez Arcellana has a Ph.D. in Philippine Studies, a Master of Education in Language Teaching, and a BA in Journalism from the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, where she is currently an assistant vice president of the system and associate professor in the Department of English.

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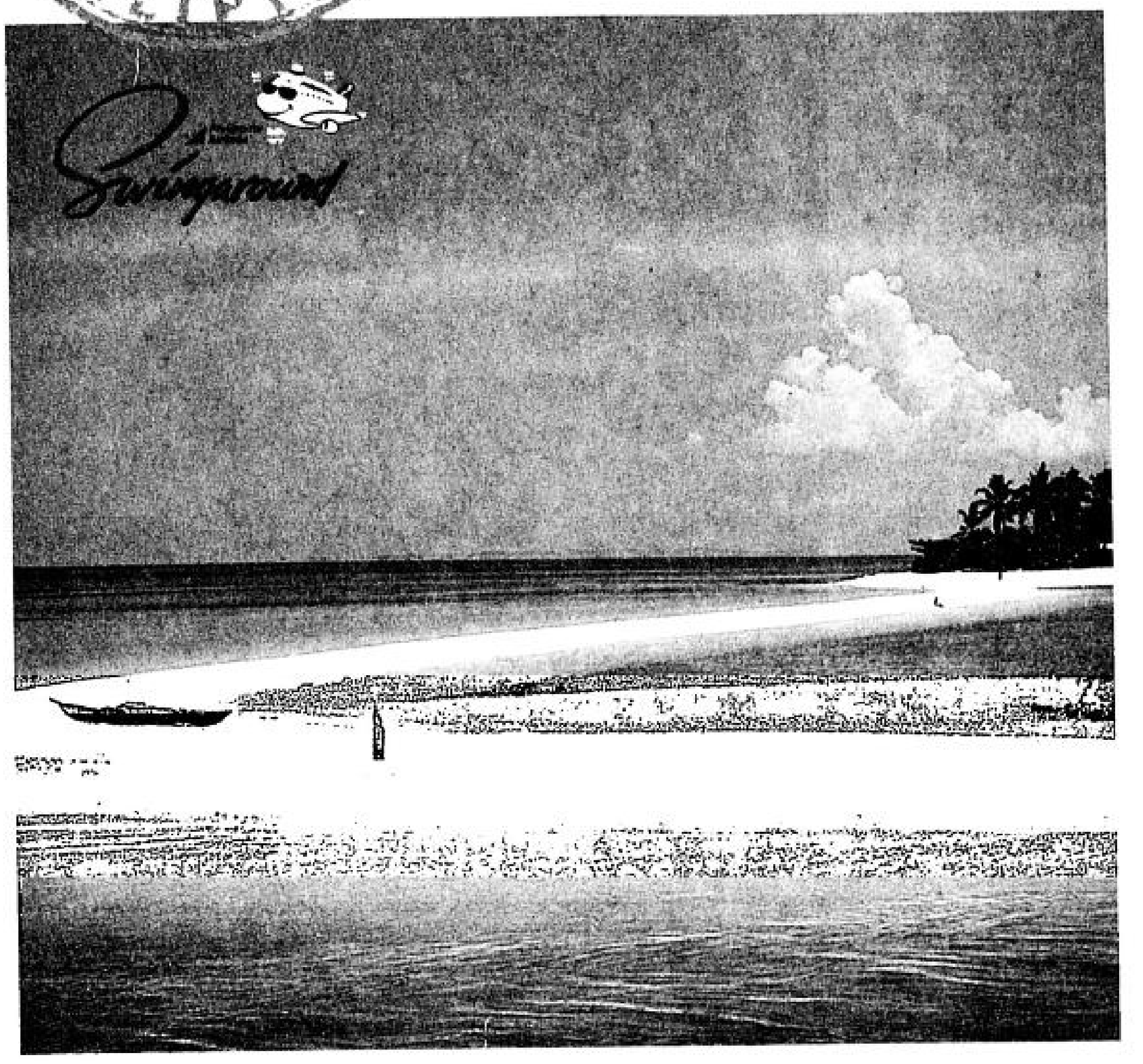

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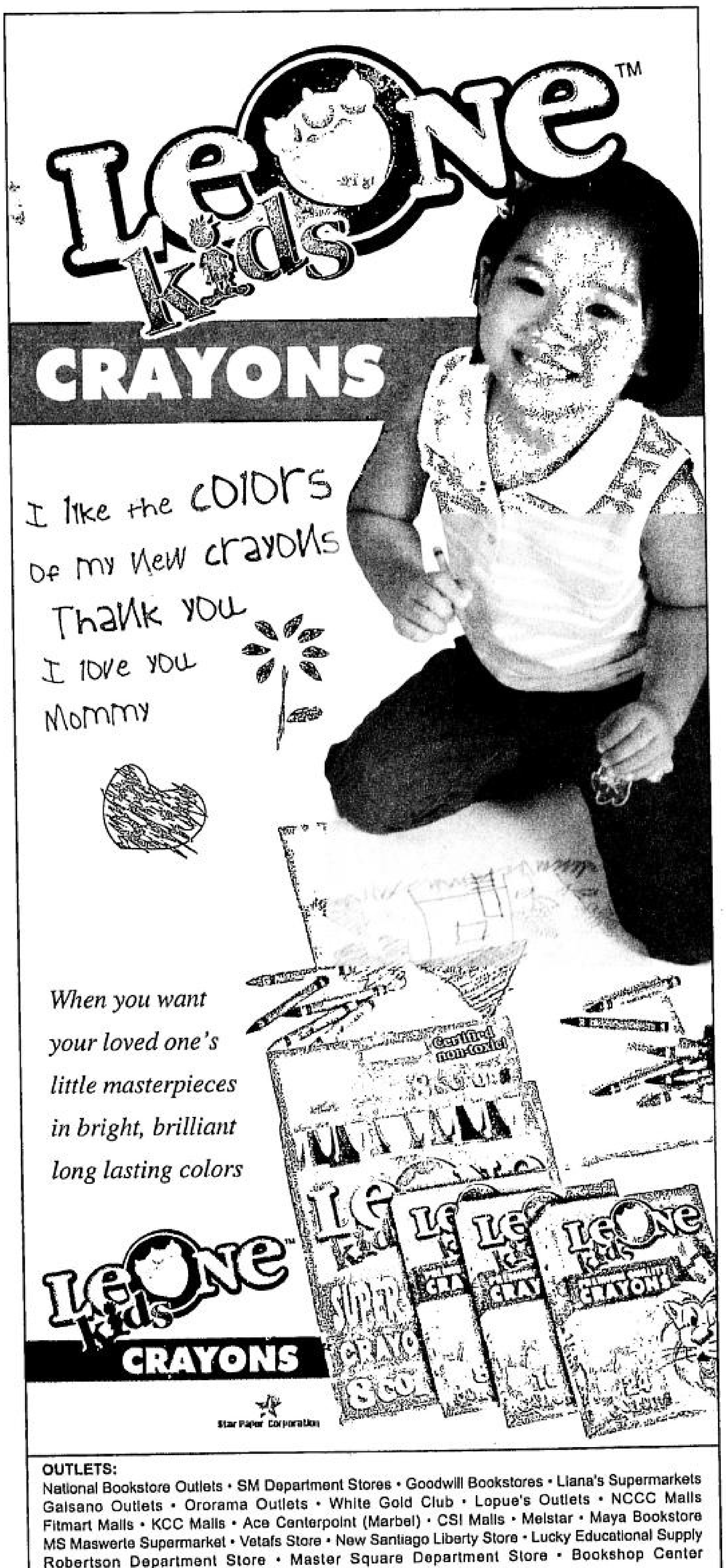

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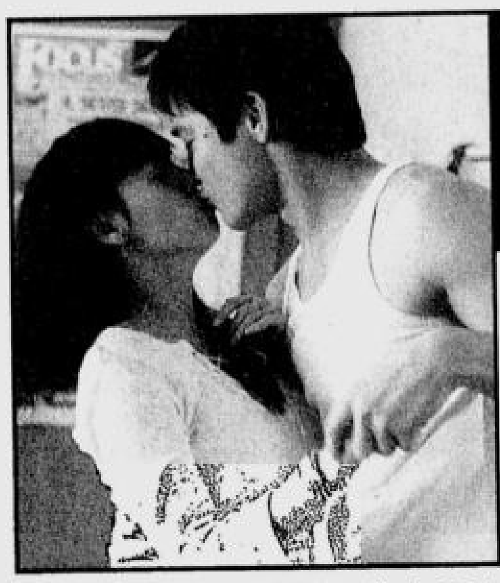


"MILAN," most successful Pinoy film in 2004

'Milan' and 'Sabel' make a credible case for Urian best picture

"SABEL," striking subject matter

By Lito B. Zulueta

THE FILIPINO expatriate life in Italy gets a scenic, glossy but realistic treatment in "Milan," which is arguably the most successful Filipino movie of 2004, scoring very well both in the box office and in critical approbation.

Directed by Olivia Lamasan and written by Raymond Lee, "Milan" (Star Cinema) is an engaging, totally affecting survey of the Filipino migrant worker experience in Europe. Filipinos will find this tale of Lino (Piolo Pascual) looking for his missing wife (Iza Calzado) in Italy, and meeting there a street-smart, self-driven but emotionally scarred domestic helper, Jenny (Claudine Barretto), quite familiar and recognizable. It is the tale of tens of thousands of other Filipinos who risk safety and family togetherness to eke out a living in uncertain climates abroad. The predictable postcard-pretty romance that happens between the two merely provides an interesting sheen that perhaps subdues the harsher aspects of the diaspora. But the result is nothing bland or evasive. "Milan" is a compelling romance.

For its success in melding commercial and artistic concerns into one powerful movie, "Milan" is nominated for best picture in the 28th Gawad Urian, the prize given out for excellence in filmmaking by the Manunuri ng Pelikulang Pilipino.

Careful characterization

Part of the realism of "Milan" owes to the careful characterization and portrayal of Filipino migrant workers' lives in Europe. When Lino finds in the city slicker Jenny a guide to the devious alleys of Milan and expatriate living, he discovers the milieu in which Filipino workers' dreams and aspirations thrive or fail: In the large apartment she shares with other workers, he finds intertwining lives that somehow shame his rather narrow preoccupation with searching for his wife—a couple carrying on an affair without the knowledge of their spouses back home and agonizing over what to do with her unwanted pregnancy, a tomboy toughening herself for more challenges ahead, and a former low-class entertainer who pines for her old days of glory as a cheap entertainer.

Then there's Jenny. Her hard exterior and self-driven ways mask her hurts and frustrations. Perhaps reveling in her relative success in Italy, she finds in the hapless Lino a plaything with which to measure her sheer accomplishment of having survived in a cutthroat world. But the more she raises the roof of her self-importance, the more she finds herself returning to the old scenes of her defeats and losses. In the hands of Barretto, who is nominated as best actress, the character is mesmerizing.

But the more engaging character, of course, is Lino, the pathetic husband who doesn't exactly find his missing wife, as much ending up in a more problematic romance with Jenny. The character is very credible—resistant at first to humiliating himself by doing menial work in Italy, then coming to his own as he establishes himself with that peculiar Filipino temper of bluff and arrogance. As he forgets what he has come for Italy for in the first place, we find him going deeper into emotional turmoil. In the end, he discovers that it is himself that has been lost.

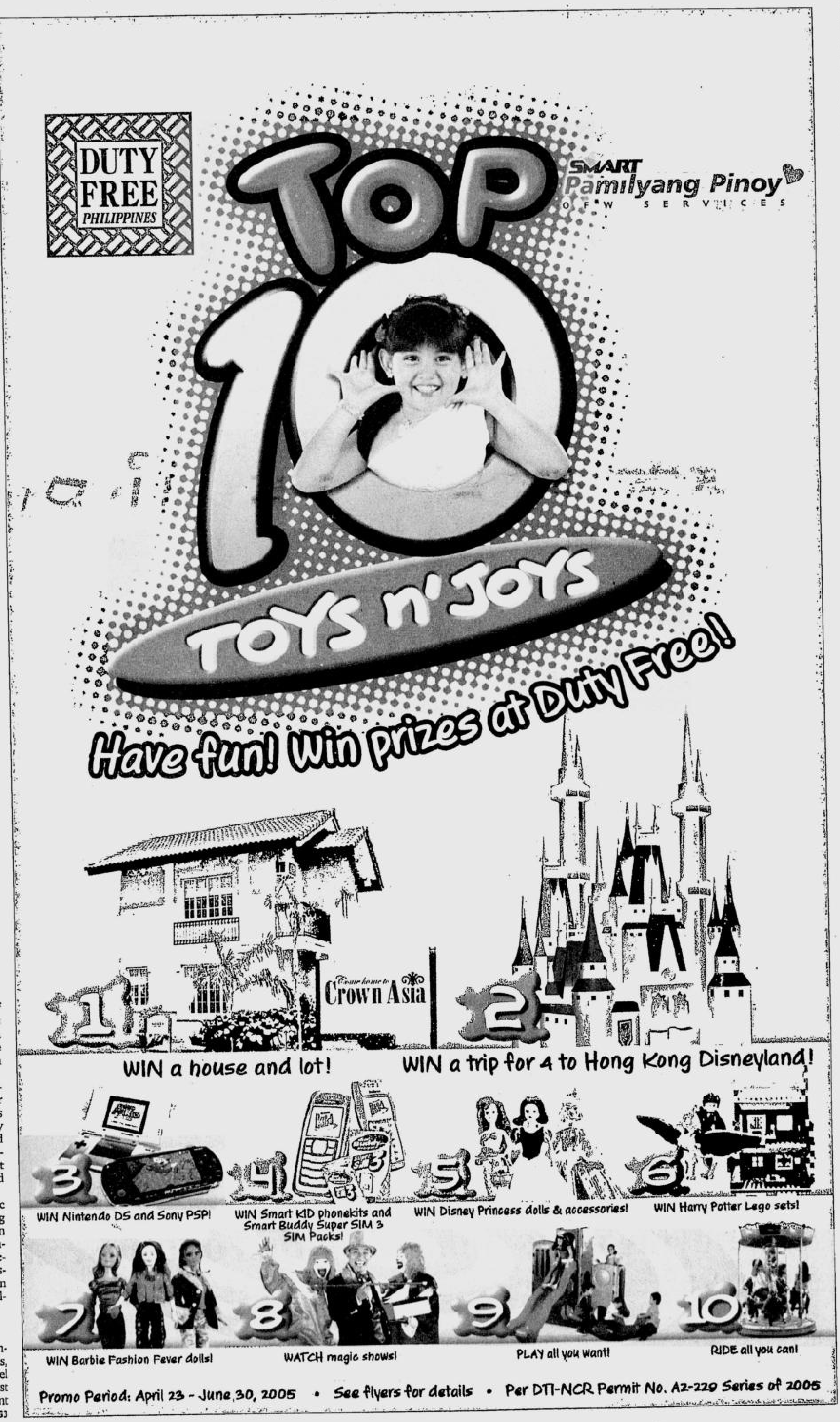
It is a difficult role that could have been trivialized or made even more pathetic by a lesser actor, but in the hands of Piolo Pascual, who is nominated for best actor, it becomes a totally sincere creation. Pascual has always delivered sensitive portrayals, but this is his best performance so far because he was able to carve it with the right balance of sheer physicality and raw emotion, really his best assets as an actor.

Lamasan and Lee temper the romantic thrust with documentary flair, showing footages of interviews with Filipino workers in Italy. Even Lino gets subsumed in the documentary sequences, a melding of truth and fiction. In the end, "Milan" is totally true and disarming. The romance is merely the canvas on which to paint a resonant picture of the Filipino's banishment from his homeland.

'Sabel'

If there's banishment in "Sabel," it is banishment from gender. Produced by Regal Films, written by Ricardo Lee and directed by Joel Lamangan, the movie is perhaps the most shocking movie last year for its theme of latent

'MILAN'/ G3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PUCK (Dennis Ray Abbas) and Oberon (Marc Angelo Montecalvo) agree to get the love potion for the Athenian lovers in this comedy of errors.

FAIRY Queen Titania (Lailani Ambor) with Nick Bottom (Khalil Pundaodaya) in the fairy kingdom

> At the end of the play, the audience of Christians and Muslim students was left wanting, cheering for more

'A Midsummer Night' in Iligan

By Nelia G. Balgoa
and Christine Godinez-Ortega
Contributors
Photos by Bobby Timonera

TABOOS were set aside and a unity achieved for theater's sake, disproving once more William Shakespeare's academic critics wrong hundreds of years after his death, when his immortal comedy, "A Midsummer Night's Dream" bawled over Christian and Muslim audiences of the MSU-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) for five days, with two shows per day during the National Arts Month.

It was the first excerpt of a Shakespearean play ever mounted in these parts and after 32 years of the MSU-IIT's founding. Next month, this play will tour Iligan's other school campuses.

The production was mounted in cooperation with the MSU-IIT's Department of English and under the supervision of Dramatics and Stagecraft mentor, Jean Graciela E. Penola. Third year AB English majors, Christians and Muslims alike, helped weave together the worlds of magic, innocence, love and reality of this Shakespearean classic.

Watched by SRO audiences at the MSU-IIT's College of Arts and Social Sciences (CASS) Rooftop theater, the play generated much enthusiasm among students whose usual fare in this premier university of Iligan had been rock and pop concerts, soap operas and action flicks.

Not a few confessed that they had watched the play at least twice. Snatches of conversation in Shakespearean English also echoed among students along corridors—proof of the play's purpose: to make the students aware that Shakespeare is not the sole domain of literature majors.

Beneath the play's funny yet profound, absurd yet magical qualities that captivated the audience, it was clear that it was a show by amateurs. The costumes, lighting effects and acoustics indicated a tight budget and that the people behind the play were indeed novices. But what made the play (and the students who took part in it) commendable was that it made no pretensions to be otherwise.

Ironically, because it was amateurish, the more it became appealing and endearing to the audience, who was prepared not to understand a single word of the play, but were, without question, left enthralled long after curtain time.

Some of the students who played the characters in the play were revelations. Erza Capones as Helena, the lover who was likened by Lysander (Miguel Joven Perfecto) to a "lapping dog," had that much combination of sultriness and innocent determination to make the man she wanted fall in love with her. Aubrey Abroguena as Hermia was able to maintain the enduring sweetness of a lover who tries to see reason in the face of the opposition of her father, Egeus (Michael Advincula) to Demetrius (Rabindranath Polito).

Dennis Rey Abbas as Puck was deliberately playful in creating havoc in the lives of the two pairs of lovers, making him just right for the part. Khalil Pundaodaya as Bottom the weaver, with his ass's head, was also competent. Queen Titania (Lailani Ambor) of the fairies, who fell in love with Bottom when Oberon (Marc Angelo Montecalvo) played a trick on her, performed her role to the hilt with perfect timing, making the audience realize why the Queen was "enamored by an ass."

At the end of the play, when the Duke of Athens, Theseus (Kerwin Nillama), and Queen Hyppolita (Salamina Louisa Marohombsar), declared a feast to celebrate the union of the two pairs of lovers, the audience was left wanting, cheering for more.

Anatomy of everyday crime and grime

By Mozart Pastrano
Contributor

NOT that it was the only moment of drama during last week's talk-of-the-town Cultural Summit, but, well, it was the only gala performance in the rather packed schedule of activities.

And just as well. Malou Jacob's "Anatomiya ng Korupsyon" articulated with devastating wit and whiplash what the summit intended to tackle through a multi-sectoral, inter-agency exchange: corruption, violence, poverty and environment. (Well, okay, almost—the play didn't have a take on environment issues.)

While the guest speakers during the daytime sessions talked about corruption et al. as if these were amorphous social monsters that needed to be confronted through institutional reforms and even societal overhauls, the play reminded theatregoers that corruption has really become an everyday habit that involves the likes of you and me without probably our devious scheming. It's just a matter of course.

Three-act battle

"Anatomiya" is a three-act battle-of-wits between a new lawyer in a fictional Regional Family Court (clearly a reference to our actual Regional Trial Courts) and her officemates, who turn out to be mired in a daily grind of grime and crime-of their own making (or unmaking).

A character boasts in the vernacular, "I don't waste my time with things that don't earn me profit." He's merely a court stenographer, but he makes a killing from payola of all sorts, under the very noses (because under the auspices) of the big bosses.

But corruption comes in various guises, too. His colleagues come in late, if at all, and try to tamper with the daily time record, and thereafter while office time away in chatty personal phone calls, gossip, beauty rituals, extra-marital excitements, early lunch breaks and longish merienda time, and other such usual ceremonies in the daily workings of the government bureaucracy.

Such as transforming the office into a bustling marketplace when ambulant vendors troop in to dangle buy now-pay later enticements, from trendy shades ("*Naku, uso ba ang* sore eyes *dito?*" gasped a passerby) to umbrellas ("*Umuulan ba rito?*" twitted another) to even banana cue and home-cooked lunches.

"ANATOMIYA Ng Korupsyon" is a three-act battle-of-wits between a new lawyer and her corrupt officemates.

That is the playwright's point: corruption starts in small things, and these are what we can do something about right away—right now, wherever we are, whoever we may be, because all we need to do is check ourselves. The monstrous social evil that is corruption is in truth a culture thing, a habit, a way of life.

Of course, corruption is seen in a more pernicious, systemic context, too. Lawyers come to court to postpone hearings endlessly because they earn from "appearance fees" even for such postponements. The longer a case drags on, the more they profit from it. And so justice is delayed (and, as the saying goes, denied).

A government lawyer whose codename for his under-the-table booty is "goats and pigs" boldly declares, with the inter-galactic force of Star Wars imperial syntax, "The judge is with us."

And so when Attorney Cely Martinez assumes her post in the court and tries to do her job by dispensing speedy justice without fear or favor, she's in for a shock—and quite a nasty fight with her immediate boss, Attorney Ric Ricarte, who runs the show in the office.

Indictment

The play was premiered sometime back by Tanghalang Pilipino, the respected resident drama company of the Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), as a chilling indictment of the absurdity of the scheme of things. The set, by the cheeky Eric Cruz (disclosure: we were both with Tanghalang Ateneo during our college days, pre-AB Fine Arts program), was a merry maze, or mess, of detachable industrial tubes.

Then just recently, the CCP's Outreach and Exchange Program, which celebrated its silver anniversary last year, commissioned community theatre groups throughout the archipelago to interpret Jacob's script in their regional languages and particular contexts.

In Mindanao, the legendary Davao City-based Kaliwat Theatre Collective did a touring production in Binisaya with scintillating performances by Maree Contaoi as Cely, Mario Lim as a gleefully opportunistic small-time crook (Bok, the stenographer), Richard Belar as a slew of colorful walk-in characters (from hifalutin' lawyer to cowboy-clad plaintiff), and Nestor Horfilla, Kaliwat's guru himself, as an oily-voiced big, bad wolf in unrepentantly chic wolves' signature clothing.

In Northern Luzon, Baguio's Teatrong Paltok did "Anatomiya" as an Ilocano expressionistic experiment with masks and stylized gestures and clownish costumes—a spectacular enterprise that left me speechless at the mist-washed Lepanto Mines.

I was unfortunately not invited to watch Peque Gallaga's version of the play in the Visayas, an Ilonggo take that got a good buzz in the cultural community.

Ingenious reworking

But I'm not that unlucky: I had the wondrous fortune of catching the seamlessly crafted and acted production of Barasoain Kalinangan (BK) in Malolos City thrice—at their theater-in-the-round at Bulacan's cultural center in the provincial capitol complex; at the Department of Agrarian Reform at the Quezon Circle in the metropolis; and at the Cultural Summit last week.

The BK production shows ingenuity by reworking the play in the framework of a *balagtasan*, the traditional Filipino debate in verse. Ingenious, because it illustrates how the theatre company has mastered its cultural vocabulary and can wield it in articulating contemporary discourses with fresh originality and daring.

The *balagtasan* reworking, a witty work of wordplay by Mel Pascual, next in line in BK's heirarchy, re-constructs the play as a confrontation between two well-intentioned points of view.

This project of reconstruction is laid out by Arman Sta. Ana, BK's wickedly mind-teasing artistic director, in the very set he designed for this production: a foldable see-through frame of walls and doors through which you can espy the actors waiting for their cues "offstage," which is really onstage. But instead of saying, how very "Our Town" or "Equus," theatregoers get not just the joke but also the point: the necessity of transparency in unmasking corruption.

Percy Estrella as Cely and Christopher Adriano as Ric—plus the company composed of El Paguiligan, Rowena Ongkeko, Rachel Ongkeko, Joseph Rejoso, JC Kliatchko, King March de Leon, Arlon Sta. Ana, Neth Gamboa, Lita de la Cruz, Jiber Bunyel, Crisanto Bongga, Dondon Macatantan, and Alan Sta. Ana (who provided technical direction)—are proof that BK is a professional ensemble without peer in the community theatre network.

And then again, BK is a glorious paradox: a community theatre which pays its 12 regular company members professional monthly salaries that go as high as P25,000.

But that's another "anatomiya" of a story.

Mindanao dance group in Manila

THE KALIMULAN Cultural Dance Troupe of the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT), Iligan City is set to perform at the WOW Philippines in Intramuros, Manila.

The troupe is composed of young and talented students from the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology (MSU-IIT) in Iligan City, Lanao del Norte. Headed by Christian T.N. Aguado, the troupe combines the two colorful festivals that uniquely weave the rich cultural fabrics of Northern Mindanao, the Kalilang of Lanao and the Kaamulan of Bukidnon.

The repertoire is composed of the Muslim and Lumad rituals and dances. The group has been performing locally and overseas to promote the rich cultural heritage of Northern Mindanao.

The Kalimulan Cultural Dance Troupe is the resident cultural dance troupe of the MSU-IIT. The troupe was the recipient of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) tour grant in February 2003 for its performances in Northern and Northwestern Mindanao entitled "Sulyap Sayaw."

The troupe was also the resident cultural dance troupe of Region X, representative to the Asia-Pacific Traditional Arts Festival in Yilan, Taiwan, Republic of China, October 2004.

For the third time, the Kalimulan Cultural Dance Troupe has been named the resident cultural dance troupe of Region X this year.

Shows at the Intramuros Clamshell are from 7-10 p.m. on weekdays, and at 7 p.m.-12 mn on weekends. The troupe is slated until June.

Street dancing is at 5 p.m.

Professor Aguado, the founder and artistic director of MSU-IIT Kalimulan Cultural Dance Troupe is a cultural anthropologist. All the dances, rituals, music, songs, costumes and material cultures presented by his cultural dance troupe are products of his continuing research on the Lumads and Muslim arts and culture.

He has researched on the Bukidnon bird dances and thanksgiving rituals, T'boli bird and mimic dances, Southern Manobo bird dances and rituals, colors and motifs commonly used by the Bukidnons of Bukidnon, and on the visual elements on arts appreciation.

He is a board member of Ugnayang Pang-agham-Tao and the Association of Philippine Anthropologists. Aguado is also the adviser to the MSU-IIT chancellor on cultural affairs.

Showbuying opportunities with 'Footloose' musical

STAGES, sister company of the well-respected theatre company Trumpets, offers showbuying and sponsorship opportunities for individuals, organizations and schools for its maiden presentation of the hit Broadway musical, "Footloose."

Stages has handpicked The Prince of R&B, Jay-R, to star in this production of "Footloose." Jay-R makes his theatrical debut in the lead role of Ren, the same role that made Kevin Bacon an icon of his generation. "Footloose" will also feature Audie Gemora and Agot Isidro, among other big names in Philippine theatre and mainstream entertainment.

The business model for this Stages' production is built on partnerships with showbuyers. Showbuying not only benefits the organization by increasing its audience base, but also gives interested parties a secure option for their investment.

In showbuying, Stages sells full shows to interested parties at discounted prices, while these patrons sell their tickets to the greater public with a reasonable markup price.

"Footloose" will have a limited run of only 15 shows to give showbuyers a more substantial size of the theater market. Also, to make it more accessible to new markets, ticket prices have been kept to a minimum from P300-P850 only. Stages will be organizing marketing blitz encompassing various media, including advertising efforts and television features.

Thus, an investment on this production will prove to be a practical and cost-effective way to raise proceeds, whether as a fundraiser for a charitable institution or as a simple short-term business venture. Furthermore, tickets are handed to showbuyers right after the initial downpayment. Thus, a showbuyer can shell out minimal investment and just pay off the rest of the balance through ticket sales.

"Footloose" will run at the Meralco Theater in September. Call Stages Marketing Department at 8181111 loc. 218 or Julius Gomez at 0918-9392689.

"SISTER Stella L"

Berlin 1931

"BATCH '81"

Editor Jess Navarro to receive Urian lifetime achievement award

THE MANUNURI ng Pelikulang Pilipino, the society of respected film critics, will bestow on film editor Jess Navarro the Natatanging Gawad for lifetime achievement in cinema during the 28th Gawad Urian on June 4.

Navarro will be given the unique recognition for his three decades of work as one of Philippine cinema's top editors.

To date, Navarro has won the Gawad Urian for best editing eight times: for "Batch '81" (1982), "Broken Marriage" (1983), "Sister Stella L" (1984), "Hinugot sa Langit" (1985), "Hihintayin Kita sa Langit" (1991), "Narito ang Puso Ko" (1992), "Milagros" (1997), and "Deathrow" (with Kelly Cruz, 2000).

Navarro was born in 1948. It was his uncle, Marcelino Navarro, a director and editor, who brought him to Sampaguita Pictures where he learned the ropes of editing. He worked later as assistant editor to such veteran editors as Augusto Salvador, Ike Jarlego Jr., Edgardo Vinarao, Rogelio Salvador, Ben Barcelon and Jose H. Tarnate.

He became a full-fledged editor under Mike de Leon for the celebrated movie, "Batch '81." He also edited De Leon's "Kisapmata" (1981).

Navarros' editing is characterized by a certain crispness and economy. His versatility is very evident, as he has worked with such directors as Ishmael Bernal, Carlitos Siguion-Reyna, Chito Rono, Peque Gallaga and Mel Chionglo.

His effective editing distinguishes some of the pathbreaking Filipino movies such as Gallaga's "Scorpio Nights," "Oro Plata Mata," "Unfaithful Wife," and "Shake, Rattle and Roll," Maryo J. de los Reyes's "Tagos ng Dugo," and other notable films.

'Milan' and 'Sabel'

From page G1

lesbianism. Its audacity in tackling a very sensitive matter has moved the Manunuri to nominate it as best picture in the Gawad Urian.

Sabel (Judy Ann Santos) is a nun working in the prison ministry where she catches the attention of Jojo (Wendell Ramos), a man wrongly convicted for a crime. In the oppressiveness of prison, he rapes her. He falls in love with her and released from jail, he looks for her. His search enables him to piece together fragments of her very enigmatic life.

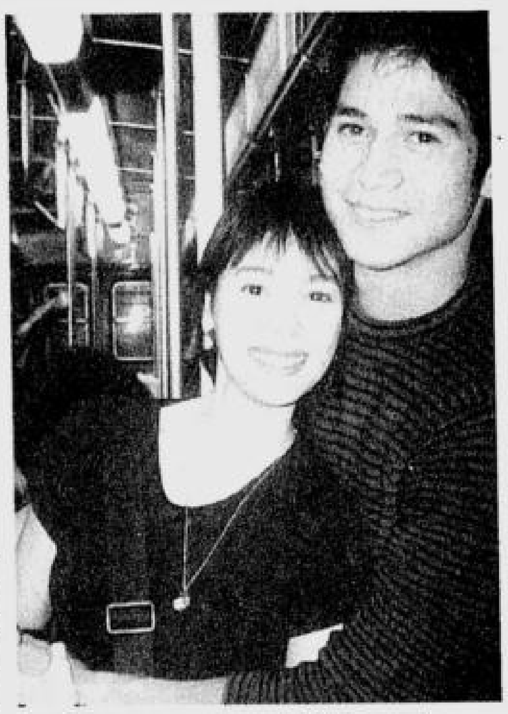
"Sabel" is an intriguing movie that may disappoint some because the movie hovers between answering the riddle of Sabel and altogether evading it, much like a person evading questions about her sexuality. It seems in fact to depend too much on the reaction of the audience to accept Sabel's mystery as a given in a world where nothing is really determined nor defined.

For example, the audience is at a loss on how Sabel, who is revealed to have been a problem child in the past with a record of casual sex encounters, could have suddenly become a nun. The character is simply bereft of a religious sensibility. In the same vein, the movie does not explain her sudden altruism when she gives herself up to her rapist. The movie denies all the salient epiphanies so that when she suddenly hooks up with a lesbian doctor serving the indigenous people of the Mountain Province, the audience feels her decision as one of those remote, inexplicable decisions she made in the past. "Sabel" is a character movie with less than a believable character.

Despite its shortcomings, "Sabel" is absorbing to watch because of its assay at the riddle of sexuality as well as the performance of Judy Ann Santos, who is nominated for best actress. "Sabel" is Santos' first major acting achievement in her long career.

The other best picture nominees are Cesar Montano's "Panaghoy sa Suba" (CM Films) and Lav Diaz's "Ebolusyon ng Isang Pamilyang Pilipino" (Paul Tanedo Inc.). The 28th Gawad Urian will be held on June 4 at the AFP Theater. Produced by APT Productions, the ceremonies will be broadcast on Channel 9. Sponsors are Revicon, Procter & Gamble, Unilab and Unilever.

WENDELL Ramos is nominated for best supporting actor while Judy Ann Santos is nominated for best actress.



CLAUDINE Barretto and Piolo Pascual are nominated in the lead role categories.

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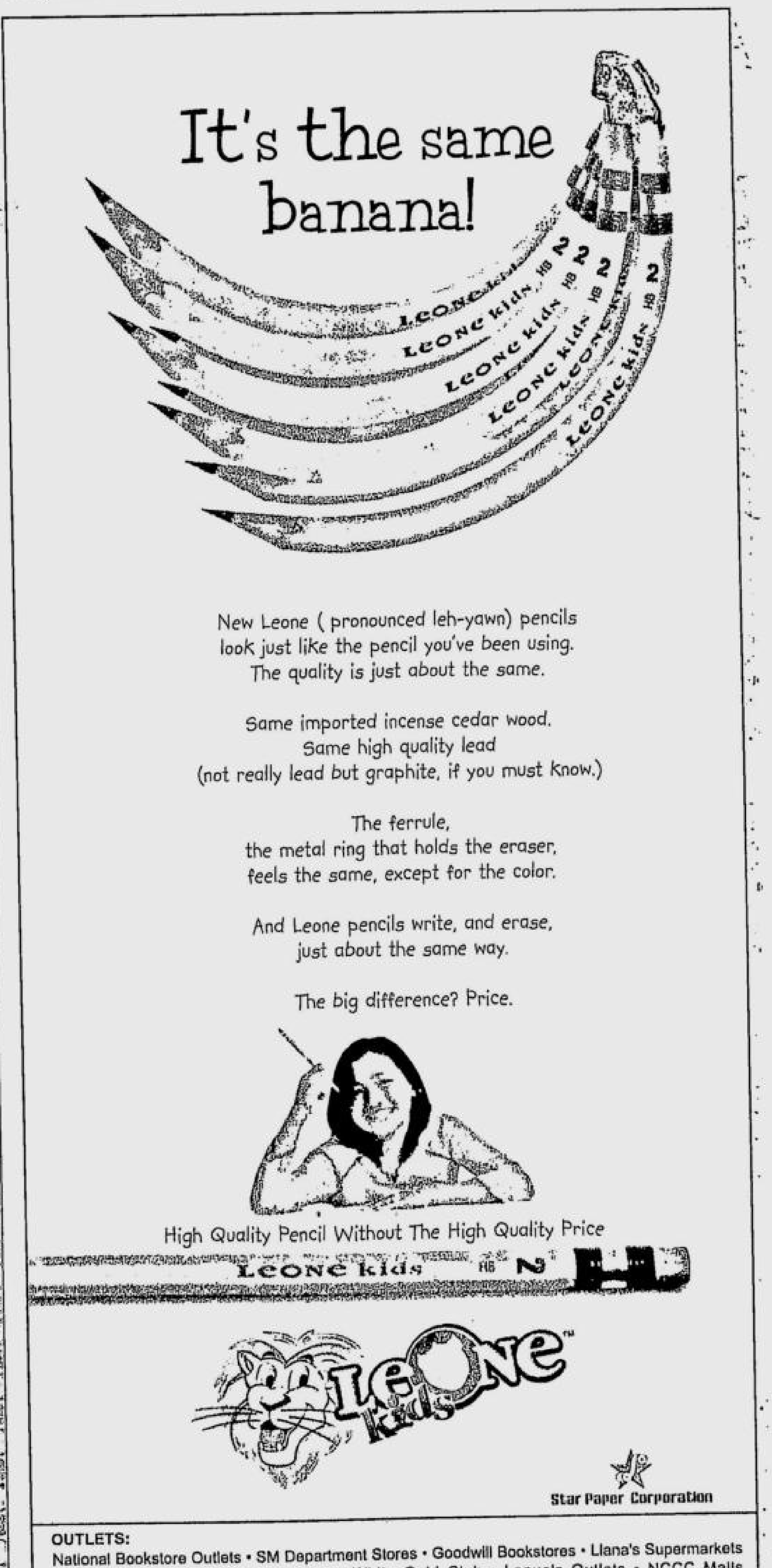

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Legendary Engelbert Humperdinck in Manila concert

ENGELBERT Humperdinck. Such a unique name definitely sticks to your memory. And it was with such a motive that Gordon Mills, a former manager, gave singer Arnold George Dorsey his show-biz name—Engelbert Humperdinck. The name came from a 19th-century Austrian composer who had written "Hansel and Gretel."

Armed with an unforgettable name, a silky, romantic voice, and James Bond-like looks, Engelbert conquered the pop song charts and has remained a popular icon in music for three generations now.

Classic love songs such as "Release Me," "Am I That Easy To Forget," "Man Without Love," "Quando, Quando, Quando," and "The Way It Used to Be" are some of his trademark songs.

Arnold George Dorsey was born one of 10 siblings and grew up in Leicester, England. His father served in the British military, and his mother taught violin and had an operatic voice. Influenced by his mother's musical inclinations, he began to play the saxophone at the age of 11. At the age of 17, he discovered another one of his talents—impersonations. He gave the world's finest impersonation of Jerry Lewis—according to the man himself—and was quickly named Jerry Dorsey by his fans. To this day, he continues to include a bit of impersonations in his shows as a throwback to how he got started.

CATCH the "King of Romance," Engelbert Humperdinck, as he performs on June 24 at the PICC Plenary Hall, CCP Complex.

Jerry Dorsey was very popular on the UK music circuit until he contracted tuberculosis, which silenced him for six months and nearly snuffed out his show-biz career. Upon regaining his health, Jerry Dorsey knew he had to bury his old, outdated image and make a comeback as a strong, dynamic performer. With his self-confidence and sense of humor, he was able to pull off being named Engelbert Humperdinck and thus was born the legendary "King of Romance."

"Enge," as he is lovingly called by his fans, exploded onto the international stage of the '60s, thanks to his rugged good looks (complete with trademark sideburns), a three-and-a-half octave singing range and a song originally a '50s country hit—"Release Me (And Let Me Love Again)"—which actually kept The Beatles' "Penny Lane" from topping the U.K. charts and went into the Guinness Book of World Records for remaining 56 consecutive weeks on the charts. The hit song was No. 1 in 11 countries.

A worldwide success, the sensuous and endearing balladeer became the biggest-selling solo artist in England for much of the late '60s and early '70s.

In the US, his first eight studio albums went gold. He also became great friends with Elvis Presley and the two often performed each other's songs.

He is still leaving his mark on today's generation. In 2004, he published his autobiography, "Engelbert: What's In A Name?" and embarked on another world tour. He also recorded his newest album, the 2005-released "Let There Be Love." Engelbert's music has transcended time and his mellow voice still continues to reach out and touch people.

Catch the King of Romance as he performs in "Manila! Experience the World's Favorite Crooner" on June 24 at the PICC Plenary Hall, CCP Complex. Tickets are at P5000, P2500, P1,500, and P800. Call TicketWorld at 3742222, 3749999 and 8919999.

PATRICK Reyno, business manager, with Satya jazz band members Miguel Gandelman, tenor and soprano sax; Juan Galiardo, piano and keyboards; Nadine Ford, vocals; Marcos Sainz, piano and keyboards; Alex Gordeev, alto sax and flute; and Voro Garcia, trumpet; (seated) Jeriel Johnson, drums, and Mark Kelley, bass

Boston jazz band at Westin

SATYA, a group of promising young jazz musicians, scholars at the Berklee College of Music in Boston, will be performing on June 6 at the Harbor Garden, The Westin Philippine Plaza. The show titled "Synesthesia: A Fusion of the Senses" will feature a repertoire ranging from Satya's original energetic compositions, jazz standards and Filipino classics reinterpreted into soul and R&B. Cocktails will be at 6 p.m. and the dinner show at 8 p.m.

Satya is an eclectic group composed of talented musicians from various countries such as Spain, Brazil, Russia, USA and the Philippines. The band is composed of the following talented international Berklee scholars ranging from 21-30 years old: Miguel Gandelman, Brazilian, tenor and soprano sax; Juan Galiardo, Spanish, piano and keyboards; Nadine Ford, American, vocals; Marcos Sainz, Filipino, piano and keyboards, Alex Gordeev, Russian, alto sax and flute, Voro Garcia, Spanish, trumpet; Jeriel Johnson, American, drums and Mark Kelley, American, bass. Their musical influence is derived from their unique individual backgrounds, whereby their gift of music is utilized to spread the message to the youth on tolerance, peace and mutual respect.

The band's composers, Sainz and Galiardo, will be interpreting various Philippine classics with a contemporary jazz feel using their training at Berklee. They will be performing these compositions for the first time in Manila.

The show is in cooperation with the Asia Society of the Philippines Foundation. Call 7524374, email info@asiasoc.org.ph, or call Westin, 8326999.

John Robert Powers students show off

JOHN Robert Powers will invite talent managers on June 11 and 18 from 6-8 p.m. to showcase the potentials of its students in special shows at the JRP offices on the 4/F of Casmer Building on Salcedo St., Legazpi Village, Makati.

The June 11 event will focus on hosting, runway, fashion print and TV commercial, while the June 18 show will feature acting, singing and dancing.

Titled "Evolution," the summer showcase gives students maximum exposure to make their dreams come true.

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